

ISLAMIC MYSTICISM CONTESTED

ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION

STUDIES AND TEXTS

EDITED BY

ULRICH HAARMANN

AND

WADAD KADI

VOLUME 29



ISLAMIC MYSTICISM CONTESTED

Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics

EDITED BY

FREDERICK DE JONG & BERND RADTKE



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	V
Acknowledgements.....	IX
A Note on Transliteration	X
Preface	XI
FREDERICK DE JONG & BERND RADTKE: <i>Introduction</i>	1
JOSEF VAN ESS: <i>Sufism and its Opponents. Reflections on Topoi, Tribulations, and Transformations</i>	22
I. Perimeters and Constants	45
1. GERHARD BÖWERING: <i>Early Sufism between Persecution and Heresy</i>	45
2. FLORIAN SOBIEROJ: <i>The Mu^ctazila and Sufism</i>	68
3. MICHEL CHODKIEWICZ: <i>Le procès posthume d'Ibn 'Arabī</i>	93
4. WILFERD MADELUNG: <i>Zaydī Attitudes to Sufism</i>	124
5. ESTHER PESKES: <i>The Wahhābiyya and Sufism in the Eighteenth Century</i>	145
6. BERND RADTKE: <i>Kritik am Neo-Sufism</i>	162
II. Al-Andalus, North Africa, and the Middle East	174
1. MARIBEL FIERRO: <i>Opposition to Sufism in al-Andalus</i> ...	174
2. VINCENT J. CORNELL: <i>Faqīh Versus Faqīr in Marinid Morocco: Epistemological Dimensions of a Polemic</i>	207
3. TH. EMIL HOMERIN: <i>Sufis and their Detractors in Mamluk Egypt. A Survey of Protagonists and Institutional Settings</i>	225

4. KAMEL FILALI: <i>Quelques modalités d'opposition entre marabouts mystiques et élites du pouvoir, en Algérie à l'époque ottomane</i>	248
5. R. SEÁN O'FAHEY: <i>Sufism in Suspense: The Sudanese Mahdi and the Sufis</i>	267
6. PIERRE-JEAN LUIZARD: <i>Les confréries soufies en Iraq aux dix-neuvième et vingtième siècles face au chiisme duodécimain et au wahhabisme</i>	283
7. FREDERICK DE JONG: <i>Opposition to Sufism in Twentieth-Century Egypt (1900-1970). A Preliminary Survey</i>	310
III Africa	324
1. OUSMANE KANE: <i>La polémique contre le soufisme et les ordres soufis en Afrique de l'Ouest post-coloniale</i>	324
2. ROMAN LOIMEIER: <i>Political Dimensions of the Relationship between Sufi Brotherhoods and Islamic Reform Movements in Senegal</i>	341
3. MUHAMMAD S. UMAR: <i>Sufism and its Opponents in Nigeria: The Doctrinal and Intellectual Aspects</i>	357
4. JACOBUS A. NAUDÉ: <i>A Historical Survey of Opposition to Sufism in South Africa</i>	386
IV The Indian Subcontinent	416
1. CARL W. ERNST: <i>Persecution and Circumspection in Shattārī Sufism</i>	416
2. BRUCE B. LAWRENCE: <i>Veiled Opposition to Sufis in Muslim South Asia: Dynastic Manipulation of Mystical Brotherhoods by the Great Mughal</i>	436

3. MARC GABORIEAU: <i>Critizing the Sufis: The Debate in Early-Nineteenth-Century India</i>	452
4. ARTHUR F. BUEHLER: <i>Charismatic Versus Scriptural Authority: Naqshbandī Response to Deniers of Mediatlional Sufism in British India</i>	468
V Central Asia and China	492
1. DEVIN DEWEESE: <i>Khojagānī Origins and the Critique of Sufism: The Rhetoric of Communal Uniqueness in the Manāqib of Khoja ‘Alī ‘Azīzān Rāmītanī</i>	492
2. JO-ANN GROSS: <i>The Polemic of “Official” and “Unofficial” Islam: Sufism in Soviet Central Asia</i>	520
3. MASAMI HAMADA: <i>Le Sufisme et “ses opposants” au Turkistan oriental</i>	541
4. JONATHAN N. LIPMAN: <i>Sufism in the Chinese Courts: Islam and Qing Law in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries</i>	553
5. LEÏLA CHERIF-CHEBBI: <i>L’Yihewani, une machine de guerre contre le soufisme en Chine?</i>	576
VI Anatolia, Iran, and the Balkan	603
1. AHMET YAŞAR OCAK: <i>Oppositions au soufisme dans l’Empire ottoman aux quinzième et seizième siècles</i>	603
2. NASROLLAH POURJAVADY: <i>Opposition to Sufism in Twelver Shiism</i>	614
3. MANGOL BAYAT: <i>Anti-Sufism in Qajar Iran</i>	624
4. NATHALIE CLAYER ET ALEXANDRE POPOVIC: <i>Les courants anti-confrériques dans le Sud-Est européen à</i>	

<i>l'époque post-ottomane (1918-1990). Les cas de la Yougoslavie et de l'Albanie</i>	639
VII The Malay-Indonesian World	665
1. AZYUMARDI AZRA: <i>Opposition to Sufism in the East Indies in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries</i>	665
2. KAREL STEENBRINK: <i>Opposition to Islamic Mysticism in Nineteenth-Century Indonesia</i>	687
3. MARTIN VAN BRUINESSEN: <i>Controversies and Polemics Involving the Sufi Orders in Twentieth-Century Indonesia</i>	705
4. WERNER KRAUS: <i>Sufis und ihre Widersacher in Kelantan/Malaysia. Die Polemik gegen die Ahmadiyya zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts</i>	729
Postscript.....	757
List of Contributors.....	761
Indices	765
1. Personal Names	765
2. Place Names	795
3. Concepts	803
4. General	812

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A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

Transliteration of Arabic, Persian, Ottoman and Modern Turkish follows the system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. An attempt has been made by the editors to arrive at consistency for the transliteration of Chinese, Haussa, Malay, Russian, and Urdu. For other languages, transliterations used are in accordance with the recommendations of each individual author. Arabic terms, such as fatwa and ulama, which have found their way as loan-words into most Western languages, have been rendered without diacritics in their by now accepted transcriptions.

PREFACE

The present volume originates in the international symposium on "Sufism and its Opponents" which was convened by Frederick De Jong and Bernd Radtke at Utrecht University, the Netherlands, in early May 1995. The idea to organise a symposium with this particular focus was born in a discussion on research priorities in the field of the history of Islamic mysticism which De Jong had with Avram Udovitch and Frank Stewart in Princeton over a decade ago. Although some initial thought was given to issues pertaining to the organisation of such a symposium at Princeton, no concrete plans materialised. Several years later, when De Jong was visiting the University of Bergen in Norway, in another discussion on the state of the art in the study of Islamic mysticism, in this case with Séan O'Fahey and his colleagues, the idea to organise a symposium on Sufism and its opponents came up again. It was developed to the stage of a funding proposal for such a meeting to be held at Bergen. However, the funding request was turned down, and plans were shelved until 1994 when Bernd Radtke joined the Department of Oriental Languages and Cultures in Utrecht University. We formulated a proposal for a scholarly meeting at Utrecht with a distinct focus on inner-Islamic polemics concerning Sufis and Sufism wherever and whenever found, and we secured the necessary funding allowing us to proceed.

The Symposium was conceived as one in an ongoing series of international scholarly meetings on Islamic mysticism and the Sufi orders, which started in Paris in 1982. Later meetings were held in Sèvres (on the Naqshbandiyya) in 1985, in Strasbourg (on the Bektashiyya and related groups) in 1986, in Istanbul (on the Melami and Bayrami traditions) in 1987, in Belgrade (on Sufi orders in the Balkans) in 1989, and in Bamberg (on the Mevleviyye) in 1991. These meetings resulted in a number of publications, such as *Les ordres mystiques dans l'Islam. Cheminements et situation actuelle* (eds. A. Popovic & G. Veinstein; Paris 1986), *Naqshbandis. Cheminements et situation actuelle d'un ordre mystique musulman* (eds. M. Gaborieau, A. Popovic & T. Zarcone; Istanbul 1990), *Bektachiyya. Études sur l'ordre mystique des Bektachis et les groupes relevant de Hadji Bektach* (eds. M. Gaborieau, A. Popovic, T. Zarcone; Istanbul 1995), *Melâmis-Bayrâmis. Études sur trois mouvements mystiques musulmans* (eds. N. Clayer, A. Popovic, T.

Zarcone; Istanbul 1998), and a special issue of *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* (volume xiv, Istanbul 1994) containing the papers presented at the conference on the Mevleviyye.

These meetings were always immensely stimulating and inspiring and credit should go to Alexandre Popovic and Marc Gaborieau who initiated these meetings in Paris in 1982 and were involved, directly or indirectly, in the organisation of most of the gatherings thereafter, including the one in Utrecht. At Utrecht forty-three papers were presented and discussed by the participants and a small audience. The symposium was concluded by Annemarie Schimmel with an elegant summation. Thirty-three of these presentations in an edited and occasionally substantially revised version make up the present volume, which also includes the edited text of the key-note speech by Josef van Ess, delivered during the opening session of the symposium. Devin DeWeese would have participated in the symposium but was prevented from doing so. However, he was with us in spirit and the paper he had intended for presentation is included here.

For the participants, the symposium at Utrecht was a highly rewarding meeting of intense, stimulating, and often exiting intellectual interaction, with good personal chemistry sustained by a variety of memorable culinary diversions. We hope the contents of this volume will be equally rewarding to the reader.

The Editors

Utrecht, November 1998

INTRODUCTION

FREDERICK DE JONG & BERND RADTKE

Criticism of and opposition to mystical conceptions of Islam and their adherents have been and still are crucial forces shaping and coinciding with socio-political configurations in the world of Islam while constituting an integral part of an ongoing debate inside the Islamic tradition. Yet, the virtual absence of comparative studies of regional and historical variations in the polemics between Sufis and those adhering to non-mystical conceptions of Islam is perhaps striking, as is the absence of more comprehensive studies concerning these polemics,¹ their historical and cultural determinants and their wider implications.² The relevance of such studies for our understanding of Islamic history is obvious.

It should be equally obvious that the aim to arrive at a comprehensive view of the polemics in their socio-historical contexts requires a collective effort such as the present one, in view of the scope of the field, geographically, historically and, by implication, the number of languages involved.³ Less obvious to the outsider may be the relevance of such an endeavour for our understanding of certain dimensions of present-day fundamentalist Islam and the manner in which anti-Sufi fundamentalist orientations translate themselves into concrete action, such as the destruction of tombs of saints in Lahj in the wake of the Yemeni civil war of 1984, and the killing of Nişār

¹ Studies standing in the Islamic tradition and discussing the major issues covered in the polemics between Sufis and their opponents, are, perhaps inevitably, partisan. Recent examples are Muṣṭafā Ḥilmī, *al-Taṣawwuf wa'l-ittijāh al-salafī fī'l-ʿaṣr al-ḥadīth* (Alexandria 1982); ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Muḥammad al-ʿAbd, *al-Taṣawwuf fī'l-Islām wa-aḥamm al-iʿtirāḍāt al-wārīda ʿalayhi* (Cairo 1987); and Muḥammad al-Sayyid al-Jalaynid, *Min qaḍāyā al-taṣawwuf fī ḍawʿ al-kitāb wa'l-sunna* (Riyadh 1989).

² Elisabeth Sirriyeh, *Sufis and Anti-Sufis: The defense, rethinking and rejection of Sufism in the modern world* (Richmond, UK 1998) was still in the press at the time of writing this introduction.

³ The recently published collection of papers, David Westerland & Eva Evers Rosander (eds.), *African Islam and Islam in Africa. Encounters between Sufis and Islamists* (London 1997) contains a number of contributions which concern Sufism and its Opponents; they supplement and complete some of the papers published in the present book.

Aḥmad, a Naqshbandī and the chief Muslim cleric of southern Kashmir in June 1994. The generosity he displayed towards Hindus, in line with the Kashmiri Sufi tradition of liberality and acceptance of other faiths,⁴ is said to have been the principal reason for his being killed by members of the separatist movement of fundamentalist orientation, the Ḥizb al-mujāhidīn. In both cases opposition to Sufism assumed forms of physical violence. This, one encounters throughout history. Sufis never had to search for their opponents.

Opposition to Sufism goes back to the early formative period of Islam, with discussions concerning the sunna-based nature of *zuhd* and *sayyāha* and the necessary conjunction between *zuhd* and piety. According to a present-day Muslim scholar, Muḥammad Sayyid al-Jalaynid, the earliest ascetics were retreating from the world in penitence following the events at Karbala, and in response to Umayyad policies. In their *zuhd* they followed the example of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, who is said to have practised *zuhd* in imitation of the Imām ʿAlī.⁵ Ibn Taymiyya, whose name figures prominently in the following papers, refers in his *Risālat al-ṣūfiyya wa'l-fuqarā'* to transmissions mentioning that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) used the term Sufi.⁶ Ibn Taymiyya also mentions that the earliest Sufi hospices (*duwayra ṣūfiyya*) were built by adherents of Ḥasan's student ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd in Basra.⁷ The prevalent view, however, is that it is only since the fourth/tenth century that mystics have been generally called Sufi.⁸ The question of who was the first to construct a *khānaqāh* is still unanswered.⁹ Yet, if the labels of Sufi and Sufism have no currency in the early period, the mystical conceptions of Islam emerging in this period enjoy continuity, either in their original or in a reworked form, in later periods. Thus, the early notion of *maḥabba* — rooted in the all-comprising knowledge that one is loved by God without reason or cause — growing from *maʿrifa*, and eventually resulting in unity and identity of lover and beloved, was later tied to

⁴ On Sufism in Kashmir, and its changing fortunes in the pre-modern period, see Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India* (Delhi 1978 and 1983) i, 69-72; ii, 289-300, 349-351. See also Ishaq Khan, 'Islam in Kashmir: A Historical Analysis of its Distinctive Features', in Christian W. Troll (ed.), *Islam in India* (Delhi 1985) 86-97.

⁵ al-Jalaynid 18-20.

⁶ Edited with notes by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (Cairo 1928) 2.

⁷ Ibid. 3-4.

⁸ Cf. the contribution by Bernd Radtke, p. 163.

⁹ Cf. Fritz Meier, *Abū Saʿīd-i Abī l-Ḥayr* (Leiden 1976) 302 f.; Josef van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra. Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*, i-vi (Berlin-New York 1991-1997) ii, 102 ff.

the idea of *fanā'* (first by Abū Sa'īd al-Kharrāz). The claims by the early Sufis to reciprocal love between God and themselves as divinely chosen people were held in conjunction with the notion of *tawba*. Theories of *tawba* were central in the discussions in classical Sufism, as pointed out by *Gerhard Böwering*. Within Sufi circles the notion distinguished the proponents of a gnostic and mystically inspired spirituality from those characterised by a deeply ascetic and traditional religiosity. The moment of *tawba* was conceived as the moment of radical re-orientation to God and the beginning of a direct access to Him. Mystics who adhered to this notion of *tawba* held that their spiritual level was equal to the spiritual level of the prophets. Likewise, they were convinced that God continued to communicate directly with these mystical elect after the time of the Prophet. Their self-conception of being a divinely chosen elite alienated society and resulted in conflict with the ordinary believers and the learned alike. One issue was the claim to intense reciprocal love (*'ishq*) between God and the mystic. The earliest legal persecution of Sufis, in the second half of the third/ninth century in Baghdad, initiated by Ghulām Khalīl against Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Nūrī and his circle, may be the outcome of differences over the concept of *'ishq*. Yet, as observed by *Josef van Ess* in his introductory essay, we do not really know what actual accusations were brought against the defendants.

Other issues in early Sufism were the precise nature of visionary experiences, and theological concepts such as Sahl al-Tustari's idea of *nūr Muḥammad*, i.e. of primal Man and prototypical mystic. Sahl's spiritual heritage may have marked the Sālimiyya, who, as Böwering points out, were attacked through polemical distortion. Attacks on Sufi Koranic commentary, by Ḥanbalīs in particular, were rooted in the rejection of the esoteric method (*ta'wīl*) employed. Ḥanbalī dominance among these critics should not be taken as a confirmation of presumed Ḥanbalī enmity towards Sufism. As van Ess points out, this is a present-day stereotype: in the Middle Ages Ḥanbalī attitudes were differentiated.

During the formative period of Islam, when Sunnism and the Mu'tazila had not yet developed their mutually exclusive conceptions, a combined interest in Mu'tazilī theology and asceticism was not uncommon, and Mu'tazilī and Sufi orientations could be adhered to by one and the same person. Later, when the Mu'tazila and Sunnism had become dogmatically irreconcilable and politically opposed, Mu'tazilīs criticised Sufis as Sunni Muslims and as Sufis. One of the most well-known early Sufis, Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī was imprisoned in Baghdad during the *miḥna* for refusing to accept

Mu^ctazilī teaching concerning the createdness of the Koran. Yet, Sufis did not show any noteworthy opposition to the Mu^ctazilī-backed regime in Baghdad, and a Sufi like Bishr al-Ḥāfi was criticised for remaining aloof when one of the most famous victims of the *miḥna*, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, was imprisoned. Rivalries between two schools of the Mu^ctazila, the Ikhshīdiyya and the Bahshamiyya, explain why the Sufis of fourth/tenth-century Shiraz were protected by members of the Mu^ctazilī elite against persecution by others. One of these Sufis was Ibn Khafif, who was ridiculed by Muḥassin al-Tanūkhī in his *Nishwār al-muḥādara*, which is used by *Florian Sobieroj* as a major source for his contribution. The Ikhshīdiyya school of the Mu^ctazila did not deny the possibility of saintly miracles (*karāmāt*). Yet, the majority of the Mu^ctazila rejected this notion and accepted only *mu^cjizāt*, i.e. miracles confirming prophethood. They looked upon the claims that Sufis are able to perform *karāmāt* and are distinguished by God in this manner, as endangering the position of the Prophet. By implication the sharia was thought to be threatened and even in danger of being rendered irrelevant. To prevent this from happening miraculous behaviour by Sufis was rejected, and was presented by al-Tanūkhī as magic which ultimately stems from Satan. Rejection of the Sufi notion of *karāmāt* is consistent with Mu^ctazilī rationalism which by logical extension also rejects *ilhām* and *wajd*: knowledge of God is obtained by reasoning and inference, and not through any form of inspiration.

In different contexts, such as the persecution of the followers of Ibn Masarra in al-Andalus in the Umayyad period, sainthood and *karāmāt* were key features in the debate that took place around the above-mentioned issues in the second half of the fourth/tenth century. In al-Andalus, saints were probably seen by those in power as constituting a danger to their authority. This danger was compounded by Masarrī teachings about man's potential for prophecy by means of the speculative process. As *Maribel Fierro* argues, persecution of the Sufis was part of a particular political and social constellation, and was not so much opposition to Sufism as such. Equally, the actions taken against Ibn Barraḡān and Ibn al-ʿArif in the Almoravid period, eventually by the ruler himself, seem to have aimed at removing the threat to authority they constituted because of the number of their adherents. Sufism was assimilated by the ulama in the Almoravid, and in the subsequent Almohad periods, and in al-Andalus it was well-established in the sixth/ twelfth century. Even the insurrection of the Sufi Ibn Qasī, who rejected reason and *fiqh*, and who taught that prophecy should be periodically revitalised by

means of sanctity, did not result in opposition to Sufism as such. Yet, it resulted in increased sensitivity to ‘political Sufis’ and in measures directed at neutralising such potential threat to religious and worldly authority, without Sufism itself being contested. In the Naṣrid era, when Naṣrid territory was covered with a network of *zāwiyas* and *ribāṭs*, and when Sufi orders had become part of the social fabric, opposition and scholarly debate focused primarily on practice and less on doctrine. Opposition to Sufi practice was inspired by fear that Sufi rituals might eventually replace those prescribed by the sharia. Debate concerning doctrine would seem to have the loci and nature of religious authority as a focus. This bears out incongruous views among the ulama on this matter and demonstrates the absence of any clear dichotomy between *fuqahā*’ and Sufis.

Such a dichotomy was more noticeable in Marinid Morocco, where, at the same time, a considerable number of Sufis could be found among the ulama. Here the conflict between ulama and Sufis involved polemics directed against institutionalised Sufism, informed by Ibn Taymiyya’s teachings, and with rural, *ribāṭ*-based Sufism as its prime target. *Vincent Cornell*’s analysis of the conflict reveals its development from a problem of communication to a contest for power, and he identifies the differences in epistemological perspectives accounting for this development. Since the jurists could mobilise the power of the Marinid state to secure their position as arbiters of *‘ilm* and *‘amal*, they could secure their authority whenever challenged by the Sufis. Their approach to knowledge and its validation were, in a sense, consolidated by the state. This provided them with a stable, rational, and well-ordered universe.

Further to the East, in territories under Ziyānid rule, developments which further analysis may identify as similar to those resulting in the opposition between Sufis and jurists in the Marinid state, entailed the persecution of Sufi teachers and violent action against Sufism in its maraboutic and non-maraboutic manifestations. Sufi leaders were perceived as competitors for power by a Ziyānid dynastic-ulama alliance. Ziyānid persecution of mystics eventually weakened their dynastic authority and prepared the way for the establishment of Ottoman rule in Algeria, and for what *Kamel Filali* calls “la coalition turco-maraboutique” of the Beylerbey period. Later Ottoman rule in Algeria was marked by continuous competition for power and authority, reminiscent of developments in the Ziyānid period, between the Ottoman bey, the judges and ulama on the one hand, and the marabouts and their followers on the other. Possibly in response to Ottoman rule, maraboutic tribes multiplied in this period, and cha-

ismatic marabouts were major leaders of anti-Ottoman rebellions. At the same time, genuine and co-opted pro-Ottoman marabouts added to the complexity of the historical developments. From the mid-seventeenth century, *fuqahā*⁷ opposition against esoterism became pronounced and aimed at neutralising the maraboutic threat to their power. This development allowed the Ottomans to exploit the deepening rift between the two categories of religious leaders in order to retain their rule and secure their authority. Real repression of the *khwān* started in the eighteenth century, and in the second half of this century in particular, when, according to Filali, mysticism spread in conjunction with economic hardship. This is a period of expansion and consolidation for some of the major maghribian Sufi orders, the Tijāniyya, Raḥmāniyya, and Darqāwiyya, in Ottoman Algeria.

In the Eastern Arab lands, the Zangid and Ayyūbid dynasties aimed at the ideological and institutional strengthening of Sunni Islam. The establishment of *khānaqāhs* and *madrasas*, which they supported served to assure the transmission of correct ritual and belief. In Mamluk society in particular, the spread and development of the *khānaqāhs* was quite unique and spectacular in Islamic history. These were the abodes of “funded Sufis”, who held daily liturgical gatherings (*ḥuḍūr*), and prayed on behalf of others. Thus, in Mamluk society from the thirteenth century, the term Sufi could designate a legitimate professional occupation within the religious establishment. Such Sufis by profession, were approved of by Ibn Taymiyya, whereas Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, another famous scholar of the Mamluk period, was highly critical of the *khānaqāh* population.

One of the Muʿtazilī theologians who upheld the possibility of *karāmāt* was Abūʿl-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī, whose doctrine was espoused by the Zaydī Imam Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza (1328-1349). The Imam Yaḥyā wrote against al-Ghazzālī’s views on *samāʿ*^c, yet was well-disposed towards Sufism and had his own shaykh in asceticism. This shaykh, ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Abīʿl-Khayr, was also the shaykh of Ibrāhīm b. Aḥmad al-Kaynaʿī (d. 1391), who founded Sufi communities all over the Yemen. He found favour with the Imam al-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn since he supported the Zaydī Imamate against the Sunni Rasūlids. The positive attitude of Zaydī Imams towards Sufism is already encountered among the early Imams who cited the sayings of the early Sufis and praised them. Thus, as was the case in the early Muʿtazila, a positive attitude towards Sufi ascetic piety also prevailed in early Zaydī Islam. Systematic persecution of Sufis was initiated by Imam al-Mutawakkil Sharaf al-Dīn (1506-1558). At the

root of this was, as *Wilferd Madelung* implies, a conflict over authority in religion. Anti-Sufi polemics reached their apex under Imam al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim (1598-1620), the founder of the Qāsimī imamate. This explains why the Sufis in the Yemen welcomed the Ottoman invasion, and why they were courted by Ottoman governors. In reaction to this alliance al-Manṣūr wrote a treatise in which he identified the Ismāʿīliyya (Bāṭiniyya) with Sufiyya, and quotes fatwas of Caspian Zaydī Imāms against the Bāṭiniyya as if applicable against Sufism. The pattern set by al-Manṣūr continued down to the twentieth century: Sufi orders were persecuted, tombs were destroyed and shaykhs were imprisoned. Ibn al-ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, which was especially singled out for criticism by al-Manṣūr, was burned under later Imams of the Qāsimī dynasty.

The struggle against the teaching of Ibn al-ʿArabī, who was judged favourably by his contemporaries, was initiated by Ibn Taymiyya in the thirteenth century. In a number of tracts, he criticised the theses of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, *waḥdat al-adyān*, non-eternity of punishment, and the complex of teachings concerning *ḥaqīqa muḥammadiyya* and *khatm al-walāya*. The criticism advanced by this scholar has been either directly quoted or used in a recycled form by the critics of Ibn ʿArabī and his followers till today, and most notably by those who stand in the Wahhābī or Salafī traditions. In the Ottoman world, the orthodoxy of al-Shaykh al-Akbar was affirmed in a fatwa issued by Kamāl Pasha Zādeh (d. 1534), and the Akbarī heritage obtained imperial protection. Criticism of Ibn al-ʿArabī continued, but met with strong and unambiguous defenders. An inventory of anti-Akbarī polemics through the centuries is contained in al-Sakhāwī's *al-Qawl al-munbī*, a text which is only available in manuscript form, and is discussed in *Michel Chodkiewicz's* contribution. The case of one of Ibn al-ʿArabī's critics, Ibrāhīm al-Biqāʿī, which is mentioned in this contribution, receives more detailed coverage from *Emil Homerin*. Al-Biqāʿī's condemnation of Ibn al-ʿArabī, Ibn al-Fāriḍ and their followers as heretics generated a dispute in late Mamluk Cairo which was resolved through intervention by Sultan Qāʾitbāy himself. The outcome was the exoneration of the followers and supporters of Ibn al-ʿArabī and Ibn al-Fāriḍ of charges of heresy and infidelity, a shake-up of the religious hierarchy, and the public disgrace and forced exile of al-Biqāʿī. Anti-Akbarī polemics recorded by al-Sakhāwī resounded in Egypt in 1979, when the distribution of the *Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* was briefly halted in the course of a sequence of events which included exchanges between critics and defenders of Akbarī thought within the Egyptian Parliament.

The author of the *Futūḥāt* was declared an unbeliever by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, whose teaching shaped the ideological core and political radicalism of some of the major movements and organisations in Islam since the late eighteenth century. In her exploration of Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's teaching, *Esther Peskes* shows how this teaching completely excludes Sufism and its institutions. The logical incompatibility of Wahhābism and Sufism is inherent to Wahhābī dogma concerning confirmation of *tawḥīd al-rubūbiyya* by means of the fulfilment of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya*. Fulfilment implied proper worship and proper deeds, and comprised the categorical rejection of saints, shrines, and concomitant venerational practices. Fulfillment also comprised the obligation to combat those who did not fulfil *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* themselves. These were unbelievers by implication. When the Wahhābīs obtained control over much of the Arabian Peninsula, their fulfilment of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* implied the destruction of shrines, tombs, graveyards, books, and the rejection of the *madhāhib* and their institutions. They made the existence of Sufi orders in the Peninsula almost impossible by imposing a conception of Islam which completely excludes Sufism and its institutions as un-Islamic. The Wahhābī movement constitutes one of the major challenges Sufism has faced since the rise of that movement in the late eighteenth century. The followers of Wahhābism and those inspired by Wahhābī thought are among the major opponents of Sufism from the movement's inception till today.

Similar to the spread of Wahhābism in the Arabian Peninsula were some of the effects of the rise of the Mahdist movement in the Sudan: the Sufi orders and the *madhāhib* and their institutions ceased to exist. In the case of the Mahdist movement, the doctrinal justification for the abolition of the brotherhoods was inherent to Muḥammad Aḥmad's claim to be the Mahdī. Since the awaited Mahdī had manifested himself and the end of time was near, all believers should leave their Sufi orders, which had now become null and void, and turn to him. Unlike the spread of Wahhābism, the spread of the Mahdist movement entailed no doctrinally motivated destruction of graveyards, shrines and *zāwiyas*. Following the British reconquest of the Sudan in 1898, the majority of Sudanese Muslims ended what *Séan O'Fahey* calls their "suspended" Sufi identity, and reverted to their former Sufi allegiances. A new flowering of the brotherhoods followed in the early twentieth century, and Sufi orders and Sudanese party politics became interconnected in a unique way in

the period thereafter.¹⁰

One of the Sudanese Sufi orders which developed into a major political force was the *Mīrghaniyya* or *Khatmiyya*. Its founder Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Mīrghanī was a disciple of Aḥmad b. Idrīs (d. 1253/1837), who is at the origin of some of the major developments of Sufi thought and practice in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Aḥmad b. Idrīs was tolerated in Wahhābī Mecca in the period 1803-1813. Naqshbandiyya groups, with a membership of immigrants from the Central Asian khanates, never ceased to function in Mecca and Medina. Also a branch of the Shādhiliyya Darqāwiyya, known as al-Fāsiyya, retained control over a *zāwiya* in Mecca. Recent data, moreover, suggest an increase in activity of Sufi orders and their shaykhs or representatives on Saudi territory.¹¹ Such instances indicate fluctuations in Wahhābī rigidity, which may reflect an inner-Wahhābī development, as suggested by Esther Peskes, or should perhaps be understood in conjunction with factors pertaining to political expediency. In the case of Aḥmad b. Idrīs, this scholar and the Wahhābīs had common ground in their stress on Koran and sunna as ultimate sources of knowledge, and their rejection of the authority of the *madhāhib*. However, with regard to other questions there were important differences between them, as Bernd Radtke shows. For the Wahhābīs the only valid approach to the Koran and the sunna as sacred sources was that of the learned written tradition. Ibn Idrīs, on the other hand, availed himself of the *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya* by means of which the mystic could have a direct encounter with the Prophet in a waking state (*yaqẓatan*). According to Ibn Idrīs and the Sufis of his day and age, it was possible to communicate with the Prophet as a still living person even if he were in a different state than during his lifetime — which was an outright absurdity to the Wahhābīs. The emphasis placed on the possibility of the *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya* represents one of the chief characteristics of more recent Sufism. Thanks to their ongoing direct access and association with the Prophet, advanced Sufis could claim to be quasi-infallible authorities in deriving legal judgements because they were capable of obtaining solutions to all legal questions

¹⁰ For a summary of developments in the post-Mahdist period and for references, see e.g. Nicole Grandin, 'Les turuq au Soudan, dans la Corne de l'Afrique et en Afrique orientale', in A. Popovic and G. Veinstein (eds.), *Les ordres mystiques dans l'islam. Cheminements et situation actuelle* (Paris 1986) 180-182.

¹¹ See Frederick De Jong, 'Les confréries mystiques musulmanes au Machreq arabe: centres de gravité, signes de déclin et de renaissance', in Popovic and Veinstein, op. cit. 233.

from the Prophet himself and were no longer dependent on the use of fallible human reason. Litanies or texts produced by neo-Sufis such as °Abd al-°Azīz al-Dabbāgh, Aḥmad al-Tijānī, Muḥammad °Uthmān al-Mirghanī, Muḥammad b. °Alī al-Sanūsī, and Aḥmad b. Idris were presented as directly received from the Prophet or from al-Khaḍir. These origins justified the position that the recitation of these texts was instrumental in obtaining salvation. They also made the texts direct competitors with the Koran. Neo-Sufism was and is contested by adherents of a variety of conceptions of Islam, including mystical conceptions and Wahhābism.

One of the most widespread Sufi orders in West Africa, the Tijāniyya, named after Aḥmad al-Tijānī, is a neo-Sufi order *par excellence*. Tijānī doctrines, which receive attention in the papers by *Muhammad Umar* and *Ousmane Kane*, entailed protracted polemics between Tijānīs themselves, between adherents of the Tijāniyya and the Qādiriyya, and attacks by Wahhābī oriented groups or by reformists of Salafī persuasion. Wahhābī and Salafī conceptions of Islam did not meet with much response in West Africa till after the Second World War. In the francophone region, the oldest Islamic organisation of Salafī orientation (the *Union Culturelle Musulmane*), and hence critical of the Sufi brotherhoods by definition, did not manifest itself until the nineteen-fifties. Its founder and principal ideologue, the Senegalese Cheikh Touré, considered belief in the miraculous powers of the marabouts to be *shirk*, and held the Sufi orders to be *bid°a*. According to him, the orders were a plague on Islam in Africa and constituted one of the major reasons for division among Muslims. Cheikh Touré's organisation was co-opted into the political system in Senegal with the aim of creating a political counterweight against the all-powerful marabouts. When the State had completely encapsulated, or "domesticated", to use Ousmane Kane's term, the Union leadership, Cheikh Touré founded another reformist Islamic organisation. This organisation, the *Jamā°at °ibād al-raḥmān*, has anti-secularism as its major ideological concern. The *Jamā°a* tried to obtain support of marabouts in its struggle against the secular state. This, as is pointed out by *Roman Loimeier*, explains why the *Jamā°at* abstains from attacking Sufi brotherhoods and marabouts in general, but is highly critical of marabouts who co-operate with the secular state.

In francophone and anglophone West Africa accusations of collusion with colonialism were and still are part of the polemical discourse. In the former regions, however, the reformists accuse the Sufi orders of collaboration with the French authorities, whereas in

the Nigerian context the adherents of Sufism accused their opponents of being in collusion with colonialism. Since 1972 Wahhābī teaching has spread by a variety of means, and the Sufi/anti-Sufi divide has become more pronounced. In conjunction with expounding on the Wahhābī tenet that Sufism is incompatible with *tawhīd al-ulūhiyya*, specific criticism implies that Sufi orders and the cult of saints constitute *bidʿa* since these are posterior to the Prophet. Critics maintain that Sufi shaykhs are charlatans and exploit the ignorant masses, and that the rituals practised by the Sufi orders are un-Islamic. These points of criticism arise repeatedly in Islamic reformist discourse in West Africa and elsewhere.

In the Indian Subcontinent, the breakaway by modernists and neo-fundamentalists from the Sufi traditions which constituted an integral part of Indo-Muslim culture, started in the second half of the nineteenth century. The focus of the debate and the pre-eminent target of reformist anti-Sufi movements in this period and after were the shrine cults and the veneration accorded to deceased masters. In the Sultanate period, ecstatic experience in conjunction with *samāʿ*, listening to Sufi music and poetry, was the prime target of ulama criticism of Sufism. In the Mughal period, enmity to Sufism came first and foremost from the court and concerned claims to spiritual authority by Sufi shaykhs which detracted from the authority of the Emperor. Such a schematization, as *Bruce Lawrence* points out, does not do justice to the complex reality: no neat “binary relationship of intrinsic hostility or irreconcilable enmity between Sufis and non-Sufis” existed in South Asia. His case-study of Sufism in Mughal India at the time of Akbar identifies this Emperor’s links with Salīm Chishtī and the Chishtiyya as primarily a strategic move, instrumental in enhancing and consolidating his imperial legitimacy. Opposition to other Sufi orders is veiled but detectable in contemporary hagiographical and historiographical literature. This veiled opposition is explained as the concomitant of the preference for a Chishtī saint over others, and in conjunction with the conflict inherent in the competition between and for spiritual and political power, i.e. the conflict between the saint and the king. This, of course, does not mean that persecution of Sufis for their teaching or beliefs did not occur in Mughal India. The contribution by *Carl Ernst*, concerning Muḥammad Ghawth Gwāliyārī, is a case in point. This Shattārī shaykh wrote a detailed account of his ascension (*miʿrāj*), similar to the account of Abū Yazīd al-Bastāmī. This implied his claim to have direct access to God and resulted in a life of persecution and exile. His disciples and descendants seem to have censored this episode

from Shattārī history and became more sharia-oriented, possibly as a result of intense persecution.

The major and perhaps most explicit critics of Sufism and its institutions in the Subcontinent were the adherents of what came to be known as the *Ahl-i ḥadīth* movement. The disputes between Sufism and this movement involved differences over mediation, spiritual hierarchy, and personal charismatic authority; these reveal two incompatible forms of Islamic religiosity. The *Ahl-i ḥadīth* were labelled “Wahhābī” by their opponents. Wahhābī influence on the first scholar in India who formulated views characteristic of the *Ahl-i ḥadīth*, Muḥammad Ismāʿīl al-Shahīd, is contested by *Marc Gaborieau*, who postulates instead a direct link with Ibn Taymiyya, and suggests the additional influence of the Yemeni Sunni scholar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Shawkānī (d. 1834). The relevance of Ismāʿīl al-Shahīd’s normative positions in the debate concerning Sufism in the very recent past, is borne out in *Arthur Buehler*’s contribution where he discusses a tract by Muḥammad Ḥasan Jān (d. 1946). The tract, which is representative of the polemics between Sufis and their opponents during the British colonial period, is a defence of Sufism largely written against Ismāʿīl al-Shahīd. He was the main disciple of Sayyid Aḥmad Barēlwī, whose reform movement, known as Ṭarīqa-i Muḥammadiyya, was inspired by the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya. The movement, which was very similar to a Sufi order, stressed a distinct identity by avoiding and criticising practices of other Sufis which they considered contrary to Islam. As the most radical heirs of the Ṭarīqa-i Muḥammadiyya, the *Ahl-i ḥadīth* confronted the two other major revivalist/reform groups in British India: the Barēlwīs and the Deobandis. Central to the teaching of the former of these two groups is the stress on *nūr-i muḥammadī* in conjunction with the belief that the Prophet Muḥammad is always present and looking after the world (*ḥāḍir wa-nāẓir*), that he could be called upon whenever needed. The Deobandis rejected such neo-Sufi views; they also considered many religious practices characteristic of Indian Sufism and condoned by the Barēlwīs, to be incompatible with the sunna of the Prophet. A central issue in the polemics between the two groups concerned the role of the spiritual mentor, which, in the case of the Barēlwī was tied to the intercession of Muḥammad, whereas the Deobandis were shaykh-focused while rejecting the notion of the Prophet’s intercession.

In modern times Deobandi ideas spread in South Africa through Muslims from this country who studied at Deobandi schools in India. Likewise, the Barēlwī movement is represented in South Africa, and

both groups defend their positions, and are in conflict over Sufism and Sufi religious practices. As described by *Jacobus Naudé*, the conflict over Sufism has escalated over recent years from verbal to physical aggression. The *Tabligh* movement, which was explicitly associated with Wāḥḥābism, has also been drawn into the fray. The attacks on Sufism by the *Tabligh* movement have provoked a revival of conscious commitment to Sufism. When the struggle against apartheid intensified, Sufi Islam became associated with the anti-apartheid struggle. Conversely, the South-African ulama and the *Tabligh* movement came under criticism for not speaking out against racist policies, and for being implicated with the regime. Thus, conflict concerning Sufism in South Africa became part of a conflict with bigger political overtones, which has not yet been resolved.

The Ṭarīqa-i Muḥammadiyya of Sayyid Aḥmad Barēlwī is somewhat reminiscent of Khojagānī Sufi communities in Central Asia in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries: in both cases criticism of Sufis was not a rejection of Sufism as such, but criticism of institutionalised Sufism as part of a quest for distinct communal identity. Khojagānī critique, as discussed by *Devin DeWeese* on the basis of a text by Khoja ʿAlī ʿAzīzān Rāmīṭanī, essentially consisted of dissociation from established Sufism by adopting the rhetoric of those who denounced Sufism in general. This dissociation eventually led to the rise of the Naqshbandiyya which was to become one of the major Sufi orders in Asia.

Anti-Sufi literature is rare in Central Asia from the fourteenth century until the era of Russian rule. In the Soviet period such literature reflects anti-religious propaganda which represents Sufis as fanatics and a menace to society. More significantly, however, Sufism came to signify “the persistence of non-Soviet culture and the reactionary, primitive remnants of a backward tradition”. Sufism was looked upon as antithetical to the Soviet State; it was labelled as “unofficial” Islam and opposed by implication. The dualistic concept of “official” (Soviet Islam) and “unofficial” or “parallel” Islam (Sufism) is, as pointed out by *Jo-Ann Gross*, a political construct. It is reflected in Soviet historiography of Sufism and is then found in Western scholarship which is essentially based on Soviet sources.

No opposition to Sufism as such is noted by *Masami Hamada* for East Turkestan. Yet, in nineteenth-century sources particular Sufi leaders are criticised for their behaviour. A case in point is Mūsā Sayrānī’s account in which he criticises “politicised Sufism”, i.e. Sufis such as Ḥabīb Allāh who assumed political authority and participated in the 1864 revolt against the Qing regime, which had

conquered East Turkestan in the eighteen-sixties. Following the “liberation” of East Turkestan by the Chinese communists, anti-religious policies and a campaign aiming at the elimination of Islamic institutions profoundly affected Sufism. Later, during the Cultural Revolution, many shrines were destroyed and many Sufis were killed. Since 1982, however, shrines have been restored and Sufism has come out in the open, reflecting official support for regional forms of Islam as a front against the perceived threat of Islamic fundamentalist movements which are anti-Sufi by dint of their Wāḥḥābī-inspired theological orientation.

Opposition to Sufism in China under the Qing dynasty is reflected in a number of court cases analysed by *Jonathan Lipman* in conjunction with Qing legal culture. These cases illustrate competition between a propagator of the Āfāqiyya branch of the Naqshbandiyya (Khafiyya) and the non-Sufi leader of an established mosque community, between the Khafiyya (also known as “Old Teaching”) and the Jahriyya (also known as “New Teaching”) of the Naqshbandiyya. The lawsuits, which demonstrate the involvement of the state, were based on the claim that the activities of the defendant fell under the criminal categories of heterodoxy and deluding the people with superstition. Conflict between adherents of Old and New Teaching not only entailed litigation but physical violence as well. The Jahriyya was looked upon as “New Teaching”, and as subversive, and by implication as a disrupter of social order. Thus, the Qing authorities sought to suppress this form of the Naqshbandiyya. The involvement of the army finally resulted in a complex constellation of events and in an array of conflicts which are collectively known as the “great Muslim rebellion” of Northwest China.

A reformist movement of Wāḥḥābī inspiration, known as the Yihewani, arose in this part of China at the end of the nineteenth century. The movement, which is discussed by *Leila Cherif-Chebbi*, was almost eradicated by Sufi orders supported by certain local authorities and military chiefs at the end of the second decade of the twentieth century. In the nineteen-thirties, however, local Muslim warlords supported the Yihewani movement in its struggle against the brotherhoods, and it eventually spread throughout China. During the initial period of communist rule till 1956, the new regime seems to have supported the local Muslim elites for the sake of maintaining social peace. In the roughly two decades after 1958, when the communist state sought to eradicate religious activities, several leaders of Sufi orders were tried and executed. Similarly, Yihewani leaders lost their lives in this period. Since 1979, however, the new policy of the

communist regime towards religion has allowed the movement to re-constitute itself with vigour and to draw support from the regime. At present, the Yihewani, who promote a negative image of Sufism, essentially control the religious administration in the country. The heads of the Sufi orders do not seem to play a role of any significance in this administration and are disappearing from official Chinese Islam.

Yihewani teaching derived much from Birgivi Mehmed Efendi's *al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya*. This text, which was written in the sixteenth century, became known in China at the end of the nineteenth century. Its author, who was influenced by the writings of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, was at the origin of the Qadizādeli movement, which is qualified by *Ahmet Yaşar Ocak* as "le seul mouvement antisoufi au vrai sens du mot dans l'histoire ottomane". Sufi orders could spread in Ottoman lands virtually unopposed by either political powers or the ulama, till the first quarter of the fifteenth century when the Empire was shaken by the revolt of Bedr el-Dīn. An exception to this pattern was the persecution of Qalandars at the end of the fifteenth century. During the sixteenth century certain ulama were truly anti-Sufi, as were some agents of the State. They held the Sufis responsible for all social and religious disorders in Ottoman society, whereas the Sufis for their part blamed the State. Disorders and social unrest allowed for the spread of the Malāmī and Ḥamzavī movements. Both these Sufi movements had a messianic orientation and attracted the attention of the authorities because of anti-government attitudes. Malāmīs and Ḥamzavīs were opposed, not only by ulama and state authorities, but also by Sufis belonging to other orders who condemned them as heretics and atheists.

Opposition to Sufism in Imāmī Shiism goes back to the ninth century and has much to do with the fact that Sufis were Sunnis. Anti-Sufi discourse produced in Shia Islam uses arguments borrowed from anti-Sufi Sunni texts next to sayings of the Imams critical of Sufism. An author whose critical views of Sufism obtained normative status in Imāmī Shiism is Jamāl al-Dīn al-Murtaḍā al-Rāzī. His views are discussed by *Nasrollah Pourjavady*, who observes that Shii hostility of Sufism continues unabated till the mid-thirteenth century. Thereafter a gradual change sets in, notably with Ḥaydar-i Āmulī's incorporation of elements of Ibn al-ʿArabī's teaching into Shiism. In the period after Āmulī the Shii ulama are divided into those who follow al-Rāzī in his criticism of Sufism, and those who, like Āmulī, accept much of Akbarian teaching. At times, opponents

of *ʿirfān* and of the Sufi brotherhoods gained the upper hand with dire consequences for the adherents of Sufism. In this connection, *Pierre-Jean Luizard* points to the second half of the seventeenth century when Sufism was suppressed, along with *falsafa* and Sunnism, and the Sufi orders in Iran were destroyed. The person responsible for this state of affairs was Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, who was *shaykh ul-islām* of Isfahan and the most powerful scholar of his era. Later, in the second half of the eighteenth century, when the Uṣūlīs had vindicated the Akhbārīs, the Uṣūlī ulama engaged in persecuting Sufis to the point of extinction. The modern form of Shiism, which was codified by Murtaḍā Anṣārī (1799-1864), the first *marjiʿ al-taqlīd*, makes imitation of a living *mujtahid* obligatory and by implication rejects following a Sufi shaykh. This, in a sense, has consolidated the prevalent view in Twelver Shiism at present, which denounces Sufism as being opposed to Shiism and different from Islam. One of the most explicit denunciations of Sufism in the more recent period was produced by Aḥmad Kasrawī, one of Iran's foremost early-twentieth-century intellectuals. He labelled Sufism as superstition, as devoid of interest in this world, and also denounced the Persian literary heritage of mystical poetry. His views, which are discussed by *Mangol Bayat*, do not seem to have outlived him into the present. At least among the ulama Kasrawī's ideas have left no traceable residue. Their attitudes, as Pourjavady points out, essentially go back to al-Rāzī and Āmulī, while opponents and adherents of Sufism in Iran are evenly balanced at present.

When Murtaḍā Anṣārī, the first *marjiʿ al-taqlīd*, took up residence in al-Najaf, other forms of religious authority in Shii Iraq became devoid of legitimacy, and Sufi-oriented currents in Shiism in Iraq disappeared. Moreover, since the Ottoman Empire was a Sunni State, and since Sufi in Iraq essentially meant Sunni, the Iraqi Shiis were necessarily opposed to Sufism. During the Hamidian period in particular, the heads of Sufi orders were integrated into the Ottoman state and were perceived as representatives of Ottoman power. They were cultivated and protected against reformists with Wāḥḥābī-inspired orientations such as some of the members of the al-Ālūsī family. Anti-Sufi orientations could not become popular in Ottoman Iraq which harboured a Shii danger and was at the front-line of the Wāḥḥābī threat. After World War I, when the British established control over Iraq, the Prime Minister of the Iraqi state under their mandate was the head of the Qādiriyya in Baghdad. The heads of the Sufi orders sided with the British in the confrontation with the Shiis who were hostile to the mandate and aimed at complete indepen-

dence. During the Kingdom of Iraq, the shaykhs of the orders were involved with the Monarchy. Following the revolution of 1958, the new regime deprived them of most of their prerogatives, including the revenues from the *awqāf*, thus prompting the demise of the Sufi orders in Arab Iraq.

In the twentieth century, the sequestration of *awqāf* established in favour of the orders or the transmission of control over *awqāf* from the heads of Sufi orders to government agencies, affected the existence of the orders in several other parts of the world. Examples are Syria and Egypt, where economic considerations in conjunction with ideological convictions and political motives inspired the regimes to arrange for state monopolies on the control of *awqāf*.¹² In Syria the demise of several Sufi orders, such as the Mawlawiyya and the Saʿdiyya, was largely the result of the loss of revenue from their *awqāf* and the consequent erosion of their financial base.¹³

In Egypt in modern times, direct involvement of the state with the management of *awqāf* of the Sufi orders, in conjunction with a policy aiming at obtaining more control over the orders and their heads, dates back to the mid-nineteenth century. Such efforts by the state continue in the period thereafter and result in the transformation of the Sufi orders into a fully fledged bureaucratic system. The regulations for the Sufi orders issued in 1895, and 1905, contain a number of paragraphs prohibiting certain ritual practices in response to reformist criticism. Yet, the impact of Salafī criticism on the Sufi orders in Egypt remained limited indeed, and movements aiming at *iṣlāḥ*, both internal and external to the Sufi orders, do not have an impact until the nineteen-forties. Wahhābism, represented in an undiluted form by Maḥmūd Khattāb al-Subkī and his organisation, became a major challenge to Sufism in the nineteen-twenties. His writings elicited rebuttals from an array of famous Egyptian scholars, most of them with an Azharī training and with a teaching post at this institution. A period when the *Society of the Muslim Brothers* developed into the major opponent of the Sufi orders was cut short in 1955 when the *Brothers* were prohibited by the new Egyptian regime. In socialist Egypt the Sufi orders experienced a

¹² Concerning Egypt, see Gabriel Baer, 'Waqf Reform', in idem, *Studies in the Social History of Modern Egypt* (Chicago 1969) 79-92. On the *waqf* reforms in Syria in 1953, which implied the end of the *zāwiyyas* and *takiyyas* as functioning institutions, see Dāwūd al-Takrītī, *Al-nuṣūṣ al-ʿaḳāriyya. Al-waqf* (Damascus 1967) 229-231.

¹³ Cf. De Jong, 'Les confréries mystiques', 212f. for the Saʿdiyya in Syria. On the Mawlawiyya in Syria and in the Arab world, see EI, s.v.

revival which was closely tied to a number of political objectives, which are spelled out by *Frederick De Jong* in his contribution. At the same time, however, the financial base of many orders and shaykhly families was seriously undermined by the *waqf* reforms and the contemporaneous land reforms enacted by the new regime.¹⁴

In Yugoslavia the pious foundations in favour of *tekkes* were sequestered in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the period of the Kingdom, as one of the anti-*tarikāt* measures taken by the Ulema-medžlis in Sarajevo. In addition, several *tekkes* were destroyed, and the residents of others were expelled. These measures against the Sufi orders reflect an anti-Sufi movement which was supported by the ulama of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They aimed at reducing the role played by Sufi shaykhs in the wider society and at obtaining control over the orders and their establishments. This was equally the case with the Ulema-medžlis in Skoplje (with authority over Serbia, Kosovo, and Macedonia), which called for measures of control and drew up regulations to this effect. The responses to this challenge were few and in writing only, possibly because the Sufi orders had lost their vigour and were somewhat deprived of orientation in the world of the post-Ottoman Balkans. In the communist era, all *tekkes* in Bosnia-Herzegovina were closed by the Ulema-medžlis. This did not happen in Macedonia and Kosovo, where, as *Nathalie Clayer* and *Alexandre Popovic* point out, the *tekkes* were much more numerous, and the regime seems to have aimed at using *tarikāt* and shaykhs to balance the power and influence of the ulama in these areas. Since 1989 *tekkes* have been allowed to function again in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The formal lifting of the prohibition of 1952 was preceded by a period of tolerance during which *tekkes* were re-activated and Sufi orders could reconstitute themselves in Bosnia-Herzegovina. A Sufi organisation was established which developed parallel to the official Muslim communities as embodied in the Ulema-medžlis. One category of ulama reacted with direct attacks on the new Sufi organisation, its leader, and its periodical. Another group aimed at channelling the revival of the Sufi orders in Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular. They emphasise Sufism and the sharia as inseparable components of Islam.

Albania is one of the areas in the world which has not experienced anti-Sufi movements in any period of its history, at least till 1944. Sufi orders were numerous in Albania in the Ottoman period, and re-

¹⁴ Cf. Baer, op. cit. 88-92.

ceived official recognition by the state in post-Ottoman Albania. Many of the senior Muslim leaders were tainted by Sufism and even reformist ulama remained close to Sufi milieus. Here, as elsewhere in the Balkans, the coming to power of a communist regime changed matters dramatically.¹⁵ The climax of communist suppression came in 1967 when all manifestations of religion were prohibited and all religious establishments were closed, and subsequently used for different purposes or entirely dismantled.

Whereas opposition to Sufism in the post-Ottoman Balkans is focused on Sufi institutions, opposition in the Malay-Indonesian world would seem to be focused on teaching. The earliest writings critical of a mystical interpretation of Islam originate in fifteenth-century Java. This was the period when Siti Jenar, “the Javanese al-Ḥallāj”, was declared a heretic and put to death. Authors who are central to the polemics concerning Sufism in the Malay-Indonesian world are Ḥamza al-Fansūrī and Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī, Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīrī, and ʿAbd al-Raʿūf al-Sinkilī, who all lived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These scholars have become icons of Malay-Indonesian Islam. To their names should be added ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī and Dāʿūd al-Fatānī who lived in the eighteenth century. Their ideas and some of the vicissitudes of their lives are discussed by *Azyumardi Azra* in his contribution. Al-Fansūrī and al-Sumatrānī were adherents of Akbarian Sufism; they were attacked for this reason. Al-Rānīrī, who belonged to the ʿAydarūsiyya order, wrote against *waḥdat al-wujūd* and was involved in the prosecution of adherents of Wujūdī teaching in the Sultanate of Aceh in the era of Sultan Iskandar II (1637-1641). Al-Sinkilī, who was a *khalīfa* of the Shattāriyya and the Qādiriyya, adhered to the idea of pre-creation of the potential universe from *al-nūr al-muḥammadī*. He stressed the view that *ḥaqīqa* cannot be experienced without combining the *ṭarīqa* with the sharia, and was inclined to establish reconciliation between opposing views instead of contributing to confrontation. Al-Palimbānī was an adherent of Ghazalian Sufism which he combined with Akbarian ideas. He was influenced by al-Rānīrī’s views critical of the Wujūdīyya. Opposition against *wujūdī* thought, i.e. directed against philosophical Sufism and with scripturalist forms of Sufism as its correlates, was characteristic of the leading ulama in the Malay-Indonesian world in the eighteenth century. Adherents of notions

¹⁵ Cf. Alexandre Popovic, *L’Islam balkanique. Les musulmans du sud-est européen dans la période post-ottomane* (Berlin 1986), *passim*.

of *wahdat al-wujūd*, who were explicit in the expression of the lived experience of their beliefs, could lose their lives, as Azra illustrates with the case of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Abulung in South Kalimantan.

The complex nature of cases of opposition to Islamic mysticism in nineteenth-century Indonesia, and the problems involved in identifying the various determinant factors in each case, appears from *Karel Steenbrink's* paper. In Javanese texts opposition between legalistic Islam and *santri* Islam, sometimes in conjunction with anti-Arab and Javanese nationalist tendencies, is evidenced. Teachers who stood in the tradition of *santri* Islam, and might be affiliated, though not necessarily so, with a particular brotherhood, were opposed by *penghulus* and colonial authorities, often in alliance, once the former became successful and attracted adherents. Such teachers were censured and/or deported for mainly political reasons. The colonial authorities only perceived the Sufi orders in general as a danger after the beginning of the war in Aceh in 1873. Concern for this potential danger, in conjunction with a complex sequence of events involving opposition to the Naqshbandiyya, explains the official distribution of a tract against the Sufi orders in West Java in the eighteen-eighties.

This tract was written by Sayyid ʿUthmān al-ʿAlawī, who was one of the most visible Muslim notables in the archipelago in his time. As pointed out by *Martin van Bruinessen* and by *Werner Kraus* in their respective contributions, the tract targets certain Naqshbandī leaders and not Sufism *per se*. Forceful criticism of Naqshbandī teaching and practice was formulated by Ahmed Khatib, the father of Indonesian twentieth-century reformism. He wrote a number of tracts, which provided much of the source materials for subsequent attacks on the order, and which continued to elicit refutations by adherents of the Naqshbandiyya till the very recent past. The influence of the Salafiyya movement is noticeable in the periodical *al-Imām* and *al-Munīr* and in the teaching of two organisations, *Muhammadiyah* and *Al Irsyad*, founded in the early twentieth century. These reformist organisations, however, were neither anti-Sufi nor were they involved in debates concerning *tarekats*. Such debates took place within the traditionalist camp where Sufis engaged in polemics concerning specific aspects of teaching. Cases in point concern teachings of the Tijāniyya and the Naqshbandiyya. The polemics against the Naqshbandiyya were carried on within the broader context of party politics in the period after independence.

The periodical *al-Imām*, which was the first publication to spread Salafī thought in Southeast Asia, had considerable influence in Malaysia and in the Dutch Indies. It is a major source for Werner Kraus'

contribution which concerns the opposition to the Aḥmadiyya (Idrīsiyya) order in twentieth-century Malaysia in particular. Opposition to Sufism in Malaysia does not start with opposition to this “neo-Sufi” order, but is directed against the Shattāriyya at the end of the nineteenth century when it became discredited in Malaysia and in the Dutch Indies. The attack against the Aḥmadiyya was published in the pages of *al-Imām*, whose editor-in-chief, Mohammad Tahir, eventually turned against all Sufi orders and expressed the opinion that they should be formally prohibited by the authorities of the state, that their shaykhs should be exiled, and their adherents punished if they do not abandon their despicable practices. The ideas of Mohammad Tahir stand in a Salafī tradition which has shaped Islam in Malaysia in the twentieth century. This brand of Islam is essentially inimical towards the Sufi orders and their teachings, has become increasingly scripturalist, and seems to have developed towards “a simplistic form of Salafi exoterism that reduces theology and dogma to the lowest common denominator”, as Vincent Cornell has remarked with reference to twentieth-century Morocco.

Elsewhere in the world of Islam similar developments are noticeable, and mystical Islam is contested at present as much as it was in the past, with considerable variation in the nature and intensity of the contest. An adequate understanding of the nature of these contests requires the penetration of the complexities of their historical context. Such a historicising approach, while taking into account the wider socio-political configuration, unites the papers presented in the following pages.

SUFISM AND ITS OPPONENTS
REFLECTIONS ON TOPOI, TRIBULATIONS, AND
TRANSFORMATIONS

JOSEF VAN ESS

When the three Qalandar dervishes knock at the door, Shahrazād, it would seem, is about to pause in her narrative. What is going to happen? An orgy has been taking place in the house; some people have been having a rollocking time, three young ladies and a porter whom they invited to stay. And now these skinheads, mystics as they pretended to be, devoid of beards, not even a moustache, rings in their ears, possibly even through their genitals, wearing coarse garments and presumably a conical hat,¹ young and full of unspent power though exhausted after a long journey. ‘And when Shahrazād perceived the arrival of dawn, she brought to a close what it was permitted her to say’ — this is what we would expect to occur now, in order to give Shahriyār, the king, happy dreams full of sex and crime, and in order to whet the listener’s appetite for the next instalment of the soap opera. But, unlike television, the story goes on and takes a completely different turn. First surprise: the three men are allowed to come inside. It is true, they are foreigners, and so they have a right to be treated as guests. But they could have gone to a *khānqāh* or even to a mosque; travellers would always have found a place there to stretch out and even to wash their feet. The only snag was: no one would have liked to see them there; these were not the kind of people pious Muslims cared to associate with. Then why do the ladies invite them in? Perhaps because they are a little bit curious and therefore not as cautious as they should have been. But all this is quickly followed by the second surprise: the three suspicious persons are polite. They ‘pronounce the salutation of the Muslims and demonstrate their

¹ Cf. EI iv, 472b, s.v. *Qalandar*. The phenomenon of the wandering dervishes in general has recently been analyzed by A.T. Karamustafa, *God’s Unruly Friends* (Salt Lake City 1994).

respect' as the text tells us.² Qalandars were generally known for their rather uncivilized behaviour. But in this case they are different, and what now follows is anything but an intensified version of the previous orgy. Rather, in the end each one of them talks — about himself, of course — and it turns out that all three of them had been princes; thus the friendly reception had ultimately been rooted in a correct presentiment. Nevertheless, the unknown guests still act in accordance with their disguise. When they see that the porter is drunk, they conclude he is one of their kind, a Baghdadi Qalandar so to speak, shabby but joyful, and they set to drinking wine themselves. When they are provided with musical instruments, a tambourine, a lute, and a Persian harp, they display their artistic abilities, and they sing together with the ladies — merry-making of a kind which could only be performed in a private home; music was frowned upon by many jurists.

When, shortly afterwards, the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd joins the group, likewise in disguise and therefore thought to be a rich merchant, we are given to understand that all this took place in the second/eighth century. In reality the society depicted in the story, or better: the stereotypes reflected, are those of Mamluk Egypt.³ Qalandar dervishes became a ubiquitous phenomenon only in the seventh/thirteenth century, by then having spread beyond the borders of Iran. They were still regarded as strange; the Mamluk sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir forced them to adopt normal dress.⁴ They were known to infringe the code of social behaviour; therefore our story can depict them as drinking wine and making music. The porter enjoys this; he even gets drunk in the unusual female company — something we are not told about the dervishes (who are princes, after all). But eventually he finds himself becoming incensed; he cannot understand why the ladies let these people in, and when he hears that the Qalandars take him for one of their own kind he loses his temper. It is true that, when the opportunity arose, he did not hesitate to set aside the moral principles he customarily subscribes to, but we are given to understand that ultimately he does not have the slightest doubt about the validity of those principles. He is a bachelor, as we are told; this helps restrict the shocking aspect of the debauchery. In

² *Alf layla wa-layla*, German translation by E. Littmann, *Die Erzählungen aus den Tausendundein Nächten*, i-vi, 2nd. ed. (Wiesbaden 1953) i, 109 f.; English translation by R.F. Burton, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, i-xii (London 1894) i, 86 f.

³ Cf. the article by Th.E. Homerin below p. 225 ff.

⁴ Cf. EI iv, 473 b, s.v. *Ḳalandariyya*.

his view people who turn the moral code upside-down, namely the Qalandars, cannot be trusted; if 'they enter a populous city', he says, 'they convert it into a howling wilderness'.⁵ He represents the sound, reliable attitude of the ordinary folk.

But what about the ladies? They are also, in their own way, quite conservative. They enjoyed the orgy, but only to the degree that is recommendable in a bourgeois puritanical society: they are virgins as the story-teller gives us to understand, and they remain so.⁶ They are out to have some fun; but they also want to be able to make a good match when it comes to getting married. When they are confronted with the new guests they become curious, but since the porter is in the house they know that they won't have to pay a price. They assume that when the dervishes in their provocative get-up play the game of 'épater le bourgeois', it is really nothing more than a game; therefore they can afford to aestheticize the dangerous by reducing it to a bourgeois titillation. We feel reminded of the way our generation likes to deal with certain forms of pop-music; Gangsta-Rap would be the best example. 'Invite the ghetto into your home!'

Now all this is literature, not reality.⁷ Where would we expect fiction to manifest itself more obviously than in the Arabian Nights? Moreover, *our* Arabian Nights are not necessarily those narrated by the Arab story-tellers in Mamluk Egypt. Muhsin Mahdi has reminded us of the complicated history of the text, the enormous changes it underwent and the continuous additions made to it because of the strong 'Orientalist' leanings prevalent among the enlightened reading public of eighteenth-century France and nineteenth-century England (or British India).⁸ In the Arabic original the three Qalandars do not pronounce 'the salutation of the Muslims'⁹ but simply 'give

⁵ Burton 95.

⁶ Littmann 110.

⁷ The story has recently been treated by Sandra Naddaff in her book *Arabesques. Narrative Structure and the Aesthetics of Repetition in the 1001 Nights* (Evanston 1991) and by André Miquel, *Les Dames de Bagdad* (Paris 1991). However, both authors put the stress differently in their analysis. David Pinault, *Story-Telling Techniques in the Arabian Nights* (Leiden 1992) does not deal with the story at all.

⁸ M. Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights, From the Earliest Known Sources*, vol. iii (Leiden 1994). Volume i-ii of the same work contain an edition of the Syrian manuscript used by Galland for the first seven volumes of his French translation which he published between 1704 and 1706.

⁹ Cf. note 2 above.

thanks' (*shakarū*),¹⁰ and when the porter thinks that they convert 'a populous city into a howling wilderness',¹¹ he seems to do so not because of their being Qalandars but because each of them has lost one eye, and thus their presence evokes the evil omen of the Dajjāl.¹² All this is, however, not essential for our purpose. The additions and changes only underline, in our case, the emphasis intended by the original text, and acknowledging that we are dealing with mere fiction in no way prevents us from affirming that literature, by the manner in which it depicts things, at least conveys a reality of perception. What we learn from the story is how the person telling it viewed certain behavioral reactions and social stereotypes.

Seen from this perspective, the Qalandars certainly appear to be strange fellows, but they are no heretics, and they are not a real danger either. If the author had felt obliged to demonize the Sufis in front of his audience, he would have used another setting. As a matter of fact, mysticism does not come into the picture at all; the spiritual dimension is kept entirely in the dark. We have, of course, to keep in mind that the Qalandars he wants to describe are, in reality, no Qalandars: they are kings. But this element of the story has not yet come to the surface. We may be pretty sure that he wants to say no more than what most of his listeners expected to hear, namely an allusion to an unconventional life-style. These fellows, his story implies, did not marry as normal people were supposed to do. They did not accumulate wealth but subsisted on charity. This had its roots in what angry theologians used to call *tahrīm al-makāsib*, the anathematization of all mercantile activity.¹³ They did not reside anywhere, they were always foreigners. They were lax in following the obligatory prescriptions of Islam; in this respect they belonged to the *ahl al-ibāḥa* whom al-Ghazzālī had vituperated — in a treatise written in Persian so that even the common people could understand it.¹⁴ They did not try to conceal their faults, since they feared hypocrisy (*riyāʿ*) more than sin. In this respect they stood in the tradition of the

¹⁰ Mahdi, i, 137, l. 15; cf. the translation of Mahdi's text by H. Haddawy, *The Arabian Nights* (London 1990) 76 f.

¹¹ Cf. note 5 above.

¹² Mahdi, i, 146, l. 5 s. from below/trs. Haddawy, 85. But cf. the sixteenth-century report by Giovan Antonio Menavino as quoted by Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends* 7.

¹³ Cf. my *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra*, i-vi (Berlin 1991-1997) iii, 132 s. and ii, 547.

¹⁴ Otto Pretzl, *Die Streitschrift des Ġazālī gegen die Ibāḥīya*, Sitz.-Ber. Bayer. Ak. Wiss., Phil.-Hist. Abt., Jg. 1933, Heft 7.

Malāmatiyya — although the latter had still scrupulously performed the commandments of the Law.¹⁵

Above all, there was the unusual get-up. It is true that the beard was not yet, as it seems, the symbol of outstanding piety as it has become in recent years; sometimes a long beard was understood instead as a sign of stupidity.¹⁶ But a moustache was rather normal, and several well-known *aḥādīth* described how to clip it in order to demonstrate asceticism.¹⁷ The hair could be short as the Khārījites had worn it, but to shave one's head completely was definitely too much. The shock was deliberate, and it was deep. There seems to have been more behind it than just provocation: the Qalandar der-vishes intended to reveal fully the beauty of their face.¹⁸ For God had created Adam *‘alā ṣūratihī*, ‘according to His face’ as this could be understood, and He loved beauty since He was beautiful Himself.¹⁹ But we may safely assume that many people were not aware of this reason, and even if they knew it they did not have to take it seriously: granted that God did not have a beard,²⁰ He had never been described as being bald.

A whole gamut of offences then, social as well as theological ones. But was this enough to provoke opposition? There was curiosity, there was astonishment and silent disapproval, but for outright opposition we usually need more: a power struggle. For a long time, however, Sufis did not have very much power, and they usually remained within the limits of accepted piety. This may be the reason why their earliest opponents are found among their immediate neighbours, i.e. those who interpreted asceticism in a different way. When, in the second half of the third/ninth century, mystics were for the first time threatened with legal prosecution, I mean Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Nūrī and his circle in Baghdad, the opponent, a certain Ghulām Khalīl, was not a jurist nor a Ḥanbalite as has been surmised, but an ascetic who had himself written a *Kitāb al-inqīṭā' ilā'llāh*. He came from Basra where at that time, shortly after Ibn Ḥanbal's death, the Ḥanbalī

¹⁵ El iv, 473a; cf. also Fritz Meier, *Abū Sa'īd-i Abū l-Ḥayr* (Leiden 1976) 494 ff. and Richard Gramlich, *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens* i, 74 ff. with regard to the Khāksār.

¹⁶ Cf. H. Ritter, *Das meer der seele. Mensch, welt und Gott in den geschichten des Farīduddīn 'Aṭṭār* (Leiden 1955) 343.

¹⁷ *Theologie und Gesellschaft* ii, 385 f.

¹⁸ El iv, 474a.

¹⁹ Cf. Meier, *Abū Sa'īd* 503 f. and the material in: *Theologie und Gesellschaft* iv, 377 ff.

²⁰ *Theologie und Gesellschaft* iv, 381 f.

school (to the extent that it already existed at all) did not yet dispose over any influence. But he managed to get access to the court where he was protected by the mother of al-Muwaffaq, and he may have impressed high society as a popular preacher. He would not have been the first to play this role; similar influence had been exerted by Maṣṣūr b. ʿAmmār, a man from Khurasan who had won the favour of Zubayda, the wife of Hārūn al-Rashīd, and had even been received by the caliph himself.²¹ The preaching of both persons had been noted down and was circulated in written form; Ghulām Khalīl's sermons were collected in a *Kitāb al-mawāʿiẓ*. When he died, the Bazaris in Baghdad closed their shops.

But what was it that made him so angry? At the court he had no cause to fear any competition from the Sufis yet. Perhaps there was more reason to do so among the common folk. Most of those whom he persecuted were not rich. This is quite clear in the case of al-Nūrī, but also seems to be true of al-Kharrāz who was a cobbler if we may judge from his name. Seventy-five people in total had been put on the black list by the *muḥtasib* and were wanted by his bailiffs, a considerable number for a movement which was so young. Al-Junayd, on the contrary, was not molested; he belonged to another social class, and he could pose as a jurist. Ghulām Khalīl certainly realized how, at Basra, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī's asceticism (which he certainly appreciated) had turned into something more emotional, more ambiguous under ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd; ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd attributed the *ḥadīth al-ʿishq*, which he disseminated, to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Some time later al-Muḥāsibī, who also originated from Basra, went to Baghdad; though standing in al-Ḥasan's tradition, he did not shun the new trend. Was this a power struggle then for the hearts of the Baghdadi populace?

We do not know. We do not even know what the actual point was that Ghulām Khalīl took up in the trial. The Sufi sources, all of them legendary and quite late, tell us that the offence had to do with the concept of *ʿishq*, intense love. But was it this term which disturbed him, unlike the term *maḥabba*, or was it the social behaviour he associated with it? The meetings of the Sufis were attended by women as well as men; it was a woman, we hear, who, out of jealousy, urged Ghulām Khalīl to act. In the only text we still have from him, the *Kitāb sharḥ al-sunna* (a significant title!), he says: 'Beware of the company of those who invite to yearning and love and who enjoy a

21 *Theologie und Gesellschaft* iii, 102 ff.

tête-à-tête with women'.²² And taking one of the Prophet's Companions as a witness, he exclaims in a report that he transmitted: 'May God curse a person who gives a boy a kiss. But if the same person embraces him, he will (even) be beaten with fiery whips; and if he has sex with him, he will go to Hell'.²³ Ghulām Khalīl was a moralist, and although he cannot be counted among Ibn Ḥanbal's pupils, he mentions the latter with respect in his book, along with Mālik b. Anas and others; he shares their pietism and their suspicion of unbridled emotions. We may call him a fundamentalist; he followed the *ṣaḥāba* in whatever he knew about their way of life. The Companions, he said, had done justice to Islam in every respect. No one should ever go beyond the Koran, and we should only talk about God the way God has done so Himself in Scripture. To think about why and how is detrimental.²⁴

Al-Muḥāsibī was slandered by the Ḥanbalites for similar reasons. During a wedding, so they reported, he had tried to watch the women through a balustrade and his head got stuck between the bars; when he was reprimanded because of his behaviour he remarked that he wanted to imagine the houris in Paradise.²⁵ This reminds us again of ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd; his disciples had gone out at night into the desert in order to meet the houris there.²⁶ The suspicions one harboured towards al-Muḥāsibī were expressed in the words of Ibn Ḥanbal himself: 'Don't be deceived because he lowers his head! He is a bad person. You cannot know him unless you have tested him. Don't talk to him, and don't pay respect to him! Should you really attend the classes of anyone who transmits *ḥadīth* from the Prophet, even if he is an innovator? Nay, show him no respect and no favour!'²⁷ Here we have it for the first time, the characteristic catchword: *bidʿa*, innovation. It seems that many people, even among those who were close to Ibn Ḥanbal, felt respect for al-

²² Cf. the text in Louis Massignon, *Recueil de textes inédits concernant l'histoire de la mystique en pays d'Islam* (Paris 1929) 213 f.

²³ al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-iʿtidāl*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad Bijāwī, i-iv (Cairo 1382/1963) i, 142, l. 6 f.

²⁴ *Theologie und Gesellschaft* iv, 282 ff.; cf. the article by Gerhard Böwering in this volume, p. 54 f., and Christopher Melchert, 'The Transition from Asceticism to Mysticism at the Middle of the Ninth Century C.E.', *Studia Islamica* lxxxiii (1996) 64 ff.

²⁵ Cf. *Theologie und Gesellschaft* iv, 199.

²⁶ *Ibid.* ii, 98.

²⁷ Ibn Abī Yaʿlā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamid al-Fiḳī, i-ii (Cairo 1371/1952) i, 234, l. 2 ff.; cf. also my *Gedankenwelt des Ḥārīṭ al-Muḥāsibī* (Bonn 1961) 9 f. and 29.

Muḥāsibī and his approach, but, so the hardliners thought to have understood their master, there is a criterion by which to measure his ideas, namely the prophetic *sunna*, and according to this yardstick he did not come off well.

The Ḥanbalites are reputed to have remained the arch-enemies of Sufism. In reality, however, this is not more than a stereotype derived from the fact that, in our times, Ḥanbalism tends to present itself under the form of Wahhābism; as a matter of fact there is not much love lost for mysticism in Saudi Arabia. Yet, in the Middle Ages the attitude was much more differentiated. Iran is a case in point. In Isfahan, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Bannā' (d. in 286/899) seems to have simultaneously smoothed the way for Ḥanbalī influence and propagated a moderate kind of mysticism. He was the great-grandfather of Abū Nu'aym, the author of the well-known *Ḥilyat al-awliyā'*. It is true that Abū Nu'aym himself was under attack from the Ḥanbalites; for a long time he could not teach in the Great Mosque because Ibn Manda, the spokesman for the *aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*, considered him to be an innovator. But among his contemporaries we find Abū Maṣṣūr Ma'mar b. Aḥmad al-Iṣfahānī, a Ḥanbalī who had studied with such famous *ḥadīth* authorities as Abū'l-Shaykh and al-Ṭabarānī and nevertheless called al-Junayd and al-Kharrāz his models. Fritz Meier and Nasrollah Pourjavady have rescued him from oblivion; before them Serge Laugier de Beaurecueil had edited his *Kitāb nahj al-khāṣṣ* in which Abū Maṣṣūr elaborates on the different stages of the mystic path.²⁸ By taking al-Junayd and al-Kharrāz as his guides he indicated that he had oriented himself towards Baghdad and not towards Khurasan where mysticism had been flourishing since the days of Ibrāhīm b. Adham and Shaqīq al-Balkhī; mystical and Ḥanbalī trends in his view had the same origin. It is perhaps from this moment onward that the sources underline the good relationship between Ibn Ḥanbal and Bishr al-Ḥafī,²⁹ and one century later we find, at Herat, the Ḥanbalī mystic 'Abd Allāh-i Anṣārī; as is clear from his *Manāzil al-sā'irīn*, he had learned a great deal from Abū Maṣṣūr's *Nahj al-khāṣṣ*.

The situation in Baghdad is, for the moment, not so easy to judge.

²⁸ For bibliographical details cf. *Theologie und Gesellschaft* ii, 629 f.

²⁹ Cf., for instance, Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb*, trs. Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen*, i-iv (Stuttgart 1992-5) iii, 659 f., following Ibn Ḥanbal's *Kitāb al-wara'*. Also the article by Florian Sobieroj in this volume, p. 71-3.

Ibn ʿAṭāʾ, the author of the well-known Sufi commentary on the Koran, was a Ḥanbalī.³⁰ But the trial against al-Ḥallāj and his execution in 309/922 polarized opinions and hampered a normal development. The tradition was cut off; what we know about the earlier generation, about al-Junayd and his contemporaries, is for the most part transmitted through Iranian sources. When, half a century after Abū Maṣṣūr al-Iṣṣfahānī's death, the Ḥanbalī scholar Ibn ʿAqīl in Baghdad was forced to recant what his school-fellows took to be heretical views, he had to do the same with respect to his sympathy for al-Ḥallāj. He had written a treatise in defense of al-Ḥallāj's miracles (*Kitāb naṣr karāmāt al-Ḥallāj*) which he was told to destroy. However, this never happened; the book later came to light in the private library of none other than Ibn al-Jawzī himself, the man who had written a strident critique of exaggerated Sufism entitled *Talbīs Iblīs*. When Ibn Qudāma, the Ḥanbalī jurist from Damascus whom we mainly know as the author of the juridical encyclopaedia *al-Mughnī*, renewed the attacks against Ibn ʿAqīl in his *Kitāb taḥrīm al-naẓar fī kutub ahl al-kalām*, he left Ibn ʿAqīl's sympathies for al-Ḥallāj almost unmentioned.

For, in the meantime, ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī had taken up al-Ḥallāj's cause; he had read some texts about him with his masters, especially with Yūsuf al-Hamadhānī (died 535/1141) who may have been a disciple of ʿAbd Allāh-i Anṣārī and of Ibn ʿAqīl.³¹ And once again ʿAbd al-Qādir was a Ḥanbalī; this is why the Qādiriyya order for a long time retained close connections with the Ḥanbalī school. Ibn Qudāma studied with him, and a short passage discovered by George Makdisi in the Zāhiriyya library in Damascus informs us that he was even invested by him with the Sufi garment, the *khirqā*. We do not know exactly what this meant in his case, but the text shows at least that during his generation and the following ones there were always people interested in keeping this connection alive. Ibn

³⁰ Cf. now the translation and study by Richard Gramlich, *Abu l-ʿAbbās b. ʿAṭāʾ, Sufi und Koranausleger* (Stuttgart 1995).

³¹ At least according to Louis Massignon, 'Études sur les *isnād* ou chaînes de témoignages fondamentales dans la tradition musulmane Ḥallāḡienne', in *Opera Minora* (Beirut 1963) ii, 68. Yūsuf's main teacher was not a Ḥanbalite but the Shāfiʿite Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī (died 476/1083); later Iranian tradition tried to associate him with the Ḥanafī school instead [cf. W. Madelung, 'Yūsuf al-Hamadānī and the Naqṣbandiyya', in *Quaderni di Studi Arabi*, Venice, v-vi (1987-8) 499 ff.]. His relationship to ʿAbd Allāh-i Anṣārī (d. 481/1089) which is poorly attested should be re-examined, but he is at least credited with a commentary on Anṣārī's *Manāzil al-sāʿirīn* (cf. H. Algar, 'Abū Yaʿqūb Hamadānī', in *Elran* i, 395 f.).

Qudāma's immediate successor in the *silsila*, again a Ḥanbalī jurist from Damascus who later on went to Baghdad and then to Cairo, became, in his last domicile, the director of a Sufi *khānqāh*.³² Ibn Raḡab, who collected the biographies of the Ḥanbalī masters from the middle of the fifth to the beginning of the eighth century, mentions a considerable number of scholars, mostly jurists, who, in one way or the other, followed the same line. Even Ibn Taymiyya, the figure-head of modern Saudi traditionalism, well-read and extremely learned, informed himself about the teachings of people like Sahl al-Tustarī, al-Junayd, Abū Ṭālib al-Makki, ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, and Abū Ḥafṣ Umar al-Suhrawardī, the author of the ʿ*Awārif al-maʿārif*.³³ He concurred with Abū Maṣṣūr al-Iṣfahānī who, in a testamentary advice (*waṣīyya*), had pleaded for an alliance between *ahl al-ḥadīth* and *ahl al-taṣawwuf*.³⁴ Again it was the Qādiriyya which he appreciated most — though only as the 'greatest among the well-known *ṭarīqas*' as he says, for he also maintained an affiliation with other orders as well. He was invested with the Qādiri *khirqā* by one of Ibn Qudāma's nephews,³⁵ and he handed it on to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya.³⁶ He objected to the *khirqat al-futuwwa*, the initiation ritual practiced by the *futuwwa* brotherhoods, but only because they performed it in a new and untraditional way, by using water and salt; this he considered to be an innovation.³⁷ For similar reasons he attacked the Rifāʿiyya³⁸ and above all those whom he identified as monists (*ittiḥādiyyūn*), Ibn ʿArabī and his school.³⁹ Once again, however, we are dealing here with an opposition from inside rather than from outside.

³² For further details cf. George Makdisi, 'L'isnad initiatique soufi de Muwaffaq ad-Dīn Ibn Qudāma', in *Louis Massignon* (Paris 1970) 88 ff.; as a general overview see also his article 'The Hanbali School and Sufism', in *Humaniora Islamica* ii (1974) 61 ff.

³³ EI iii, 953 b.

³⁴ Ibn Taymiyya, *Kitāb al-istiḡāma*, ed. Muḥammad Rashīd Ṣālim (Riyadh 1404/1983) i, 168, l. 1 ff.

³⁵ Cf. George Makdisi in: *American Journal of Arabic Studies* i (1973) 123 f.

³⁶ Id., in *Humaniora Islamica* ii (1974) 68 f.

³⁷ Cf. Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil wa'l-masāʾil*, i-v, (Beirut 1403/1983) i, 156 ff. For the ritual itself cf. Henri Corbin in *Traité des Compagnons-Chevaliers*, ed. M. Sarraf (Teheran-Paris 1973) introd. 72 ff., after the *Futuvvatnāme* by Najm al-Dīn Zarkūb-i Tabrizi.

³⁸ Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿa* i, 131 ff.; for their practices cf. EI viii, 525 f.

³⁹ Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿa* ii, 3 ff. For a detailed analysis of Ibn Taymiyya's attitude towards Sufism cf. Fritz Meier, 'Das sauberste über die vorbestimmung', *Saeculum* xxxii (1981) 74 ff.; also published in Fritz Meier, *Bausteine. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Islamwissenschaft*, i-iii (Istanbul-Stuttgart 1992) ii, 696 ff. Meier is perhaps unduly sceptical with regard to the *khirqā* tradition (ibid. 701, n. 9).

This does not mean that opposition from outside did not exist. The trial against al-Ḥallāj is a case in point, as are the other two spectacular executions, those of ʿAyn al-Qudāt-i Hamadhānī and Yaḥyā al-Suhrawardī. These are complex cases, which are difficult to analyze. As far as al-Ḥallāj is concerned, the title of Ibn ʿAqīl's book indicates where part of the problem lay: in al-Ḥallāj's miracles. Again the opponents were jurists, but the issue was rather a theological one. Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, a man who claimed the seal of sainthood for himself, had complained about the *ʿulamāʾ al-ẓāhir*, scholars who only accepted the evidentiary miracles (*āyāt*) which God had performed for the prophets and therefore did not get to the inner core of things.⁴⁰ The people he had in mind belonged to his own Eastern Iranian milieu; they were Ḥanafites, perhaps also Muʿtazilites. Both groups intermixed, but our documentation comes mainly from the *kalām* sources. Rationalists like the Muʿtazilites did not have much patience with charismatics and miracle-workers; they felt the challenge to their own claim of intellectual and educational superiority, and in many cases a social difference was also involved. Al-Jubbāʾī, the Muʿtazilī teacher of al-Ashʿarī, is said to have attended one of al-Ḥallāj's performances in Ahwāz and to have ridiculed the miracle al-Ḥallāj worked on this occasion. Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār's chapter on prophecy in his *Mughnī* is full of such stories;⁴¹ al-Ḥallāj appears as a trickster who cannot be taken seriously. With al-Tanūkhī's *Nishwār al-muḥāḍara*⁴² this image was transported into *adab* literature; we find it later on, for instance, in the *Kitāb al-ḥiyāl* translated by René Khawam,⁴³ a text which chronologically and, in a certain sense, in terms of its narrative posture comes close to the *Arabian Nights*. The background to the controversy is clear: Muʿtazilī theology had spent a lot of time in defining the difference between sorcery and prophecy; al-Jāḥiẓ had perhaps been the first to write on *al-Farq bayn al-nabī wa'l-mutanabbī*, and he seems to have done so in order to prove that the challenge brought forth by the Prophet as evi-

⁴⁰ *Kitāb sirat al-awliyāʾ*, § 105, in Bernd Radtke (ed.), *Drei Schriften des Theosophen von Tirmid* (Beirut 1992) 82 f./trs. Bernd Radtke and John O'Kane, *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism* (Richmond 1996) 155 f.

⁴¹ For the story mentioned cf. vol. xv, ed. Maḥmūd al-Khuḍayrī and Maḥmūd Muḥammad Qāsim (Cairo 1385/1965) 272, l. 11 ff.

⁴² On the contents of this text, see the contribution by Florian Sobieroj in the present volume, p. 80.

⁴³ *Le livre des ruses. La stratégie politique des Arabes* (Paris 1976).

dence of God's *i'jāz* came from a trustworthy person. A miracle then could only be understood as the confirmation of a claim to prophethood. Consequently, al-Ḥallāj looked like a competitor with Muḥammad; as a matter of fact, mystics of the preceding generations had not pretended to work miracles, i.e. to suspend the laws of nature by 'breaking custom' as the Muʿtazilites used to say.

However, the Ḥanafites — or those among them who sided with the Muʿtazila — were confronted, on their ancestral Iranian territory, by the disciples of al-Shāfiʿī, and the Muʿtazila was superseded, in certain areas at least, by the Ashʿarites. Due to the somewhat one-sided distribution of our sources, we are best informed about the situation in the town of Nēshāpūr. It is there that al-Qushayrī, the author of the *Risāla*, who as a Shāfiʿī jurist suffered persecution from the Ḥanafites under the Saljuq vizier al-Kundurī, wrote his famous *Shikāyat ahl al-sunna bi-mā nālahum min al-miḥna* in which he defends al-Ashʿarī against the slanderous accusations of his adversaries. But he was not an isolated figure as has been believed for a long time. It is true that Tilman Nagel was perhaps a bit rash in speaking about a 'new piety' in this respect,⁴⁴ but he has managed to trace the movement back to origins outside Khurasan, to Ibn Khafif in Shiraz who as a Sufi was an Ashʿarite in matters of *kalām*, and to al-Bāqillānī in Iraq who as a Mālikī jurist adopted Ashʿarite theology and mixed it with 'new piety'. In his *Kitāb al-bayān ʿan al-farq bayn al-muʿjizāt wa'l-karāmāt*, al-Bāqillānī was, as far as I can see, the first theologian to employ rational arguments to defend the possibility of miracles performed by human beings who were not prophets (although he still regarded al-Ḥallāj as an impostor), and in his *Kitāb al-inṣāf* — if we may assume the book is authentic⁴⁵ — he quotes al-Junayd as well as al-Shibli, two authorities who also appear in Ibn Qudāma's *Qādirī silsila*. Gradually Sufism succeeded in permeating the scholarly establishment almost at every point. Even the Ḥanafis at Nēshāpūr had their own ascetic intruders: the Karrāmiyya who since the middle of the third century preached to the lower classes

⁴⁴ *Die Festung des Glaubens. Triumph und Scheitern des islamischen Rationalismus im 11. Jahrhundert* (Munich 1988) 95 ff.

⁴⁵ It is not mentioned in the list of al-Bāqillānī's works given by Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ in his *Tartīb al-madārik*, ed. Aḥmad Bakīr Maḥmūd (Beirut 1387/1967) ii, 601 f. Moreover, the enigmatic Sharīf al-Ajall al-Imām Jamāl al-Islām, who is quoted in the book (67, l. 6), does not seem to fit into al-Bāqillānī's period. The book would then either be spurious or contain later interpolations. In the latter case the references to al-Junayd, al-Shibli and others may have been added as well.

and started missionizing the rural areas of Ghūr and Gharchistān. It is true that they did not perform miracles, nor did they surprise their audience with unusual mystical ideas; they are on record rather because of their anthropomorphism. But they also bear witness to the appeal of ostentatious asceticism. Ibn Karrām wore a garment of unsewn sheep skin when he travelled around; in Nēshāpūr he used to sit on a fleece in a compartment built of brick, with a white *qalan-suwa* on his head, and would offer everyone religious advice.⁴⁶

If there was any opposition to Sufism in these centuries, it always depended on how individual Sufis or certain practices were perceived. There has never been any clear and uniform pattern of enmity between the jurists and the mystics, as Julian Baldick has recently stressed again.⁴⁷ °Umar al-Suhrawardī even taught jurisprudence to students whom he had housed in his 'lodge'. This is, of course, not necessarily a representative case. There have always been mystics who scandalized their pious environment by their idiosyncrasies: by listening to music and love poetry (*samā'*), by conversing with young boys and watching them as a *shāhid*, a witness to God's beauty who has been created according to His image,⁴⁸ or by outright antinomianism (*ibāḥa*). But this does not seem to have affected the overall attitude towards them, and normally did not destroy an ultimate basis of tolerance. This statement applies, by the way, to both sides. Even Ibn °Arabī, though not very juridically-minded and a scandal to Ibn Taymiyya as we heard, felt obliged to assure his reader: 'God forbid, my brother, that you should think that I blame the jurists for being jurists or for their practice of jurisprudence, for such an attitude is not permissible for a Muslim, and the nobility of the Law is beyond question.' After all, he had collected *ijāzas* from jurists as well as from other scholars. The problem he saw was on a different level. 'However', he continues, 'I do censure those jurists who, harbouring merely worldly aims, cynically study the Law with the sole object of acquiring fame.' This was a point which had already been stressed by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī and many others like him; al-Ghazzālī did the same in his *Iḥyā'*, and he would also have agreed when, in the end, Ibn °Arabī sets the balance straight: 'In the same way I have censured certain Sufis, not the sincere ones, but

⁴⁶ *Theologie und Gesellschaft* ii, 609 f.

⁴⁷ *Mystical Islam* (London 1989) 174, taking up a statement by Gilles Veinstein.

⁴⁸ Ritter, *Das meer der seele* 470 ff.

only those who affect before men a holiness which is contradicted by their true condition’.

However, Ibn ʿArabī also illustrates to what extent the pretensions of mysticism had grown, intellectually as well as socially. There is no shyness about him; he displays his speculative system with vigor and self-confidence. And there was a market for his ideas; they remained influential for centuries. He could afford to look down on the jurists he censured; ‘Since they continually offend against the Friends of God, they shall surely perish by their own testimony’, he says, and the context in which he says all this is equally significant, namely his *Risālat rūḥ al-quds* which Asín-Palacios translated into Spanish long ago and which through Austin’s recent English version has become accessible to a larger Orientalist reading public.⁴⁹ For the book mainly contains stories about *santones andaluces*, as Asín-Palacios puts it,⁵⁰ simple saints who sometimes did not even know how to read or write. The Sufis had filtered down to the grass-roots of society, and Ibn ʿArabī, in spite of being the intellectual *par excellence*, was quite aware of this fact; he had great respect for the charisma of the illiterate, and he was pleased to report on the power they exerted over the common-folk — and over their enemies. The Sufis had ceased to be unsure of their role; they were no longer concerned with defining the phenomenon of mysticism as such. This latter issue had been the quest of people like al-Muḥāsibī or al-Junayd; with enormous psychological insight and bold, though sometimes still incomprehensible and awkward language, they had opened up a new horizon. Now, however, it was the sheer power of personality which mattered; the miracle-worker as well as the speculative genius had become common figures, or to put it more precisely: large strata of the population were on the look-out to be overwhelmed either by the radiance of a gifted individual’s charisma or by the depth of his unusual insight. The number of those who still shook their head and complained about this insight being irrational or close to gnosticism had decreased.⁵¹ Orientalist scholarship has only recently come to grips with the phenomenon; Western scholars

⁴⁹ R.W.J. Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia. The Rūḥ al-quds and al-Durrat al-fākhira of Ibn ʿArabī* (Univ. of California Press 1971) 105.

⁵⁰ *Vidas de santones andaluces* (Madrid 1933).

⁵¹ For later criticism of Ibn ʿArabī cf. the article by Michel Chodkiewicz in this volume, p. 93 ff. and now also Eric Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Egypte et en Syrie sous les derniers Mamelouks et les premiers Ottomans. Orientations spirituelles et enjeux culturels* (Damascus 1995) 452 ff.

were strongly embedded in rationalism themselves. Even Massignon did not have much to say about Ibn ʿArabī.

The success had not come overnight; it was a slow process. In a seminal article, Fritz Meier, taking up a differentiation used by Ibn ʿAbbād al-Rundī, has shown how the *shaykh al-taʿlīm*, the theoretizing mystical professor, turned into the *shaykh al-tarbiya*, the master who shaped the life and the person of his disciple.⁵² Gradually, unconditional obedience became more important than mere learning; thus, the student was not only expected to attend classes, but he depended on the teacher as his psychagogue and had to ask his permission in whatever he did. He had to give up his own will, and was forced to submit to a soldierlike discipline. This was a sign of intimacy as well as of awe-inspiring distance; from such obedience the emerging Sufi brotherhoods drew their strength and their cohesion. The Mongol period which, with its breakdown of secular Islamic authority and its impulse for survival in a shattered and fragmented society, is normally held responsible for this development, merely added the final touch to it; in reality, the development had started much earlier. Meier pins the process down with respect to the town of Nēshāpūr; authors like al-Sulamī and al-Qushayrī already bear witness to the ongoing change. And in a broad overview he enumerates the most important consequences, mainly with regard to Iran: in the third/ninth century Sufism was still an individual endeavour and rested on a personal basis, in the eighth/fourteenth century (i.e. a hundred years after Ibn ʿArabī) it was organized in *ṭarīqas* and family enterprises, and only the Uwāyis still represented the old type.⁵³ In the third century philosophy and metaphysics still lay beyond the horizon of mysticism, whereas in the eighth century they can be found almost everywhere. In the third century the visionary element, though it did exist, was usually left unmentioned when it came to public statements; in the eighth century it is an important element of mystical self-understanding. In the third century Sufism did not yet belong to the canon of religious disciplines; in the eighth

⁵² *Hurāsān und das ende der klassischen sufik*, in *La Persia nel Medioevo* (Rome 1971) 545 ff.; also published in Meier, *Bausteine* i, 133 ff.

⁵³ Cf. now Julian Baldick, *Imaginary Muslims. The Uwāysi Sufis of Central Asia* (London 1993); but see also Devin DeWeese, 'The *Tadhkira-i Bughrā-khān* and the «Uwāysi» Sufies of Central Asia: Notes in Review of *Imaginary Muslims*', *Central Asiatic Journal* xl (1996) 87-127. For their presence in Egypt cf. the remarks by E. Geoffroy (note 51 above) 215f.

century it sometimes overshadows theology and jurisprudence. In the third century the authorities and the government were normally suspicious of it; in the eighth century they rather seek its support. In the third century Sufism, like theology and jurisprudence, spoke Arabic; in the eighth century, in contrast to theology and jurisprudence, it expresses itself in Persian (and already in other languages).

Vernacular language, visionary experience, rigid obedience, connections with the government, this is where popular influence and immediate power came in. Several of the contributions to the present volume concern dimensions of power politics. An example, again from Iran: Khwāja ʿUbayd Allāh Aḥrār, on whom we are somewhat better informed thanks to Russian and, recently, North-American research. Aḥrār was a Naqshbandī Sufi, but also a mighty landowner and politician; his holdings, documented by the *waqf*-endowments related to him and his immediate descendants, were located in the *wilāyats* of Tashkent, Samarqand, and Bukhara, and even beyond these areas, and they seem to have been vast if we may judge by occasional tax reports. After the death — or judicial murder — of Ulugh Beg, the son of Shāhrukh, he supported the Timurid ruler Abū Saʿīd who was able to gain control of Samarqand in 855/1451. In the official source of the Naqshbandī order, the *Rashahāt ʿayn al-ḥayāt* by Kamāl al-Dīn al-Kāshifī, he is depicted as the one who was primarily responsible for Abū Saʿīd's success, but he is said to have lent his help only after the prince had promised to uphold the sharia. However this may be, he came to enjoy considerable favour at the court, and he used to give advice concerning political decisions, even military campaigns. This was not without risk; when Abū Saʿīd wanted to exploit the power vacuum in western Persia after the Qara Qoyunlu leader Jihānshāh had been killed in his fight against Uzun Ḥasan's Aq Qoyunlu, Aḥrār encouraged him to set out on campaign, but this only led to Abū Saʿīd's death and the annihilation of his army. In spite of this, Aḥrār survived the authority crisis which ensued. He was obviously a very forceful personality. However, it was perhaps not so much his power as such which made him so forceful, but the belief people had in his power, the aura which surrounded him. Sufism could be an instrument for controlling the masses; this may have been one of the reasons why the government was so interested in him. On the other hand, he may have posed as an upholder of orthodoxy as he had to take account of the opposition, opposition from fellow Sufis at Samarqand and from theologians in the

same town. Under these circumstances power struggle was an inevitable element in the overall the picture.⁵⁴

Sufi involvement in contemporary politics continued to be a familiar pattern for centuries. We need only think of a person like Abū'l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī who, as the head of the Rifāʿiyya order, acted as an advisor to the Ottoman sultan ʿAbdulḥamīd.⁵⁵ Not long before, during Turkey's unsuccessful wars with Russia, Shaykh Diyāʾ al-Dīn Gümüşkhanewī (d. 1313/1894), a Naqshbandī, went with his followers to fight the enemy at the front,⁵⁶ and Shaykh Fehmī at Erzinjān, head of the Khālīdī branch, was approached for advice by the generals, like an oracle; we learn about his influence through the bulky autobiography of one of his disciples, the Aşçı Dede İbrāhīm.⁵⁷ When he made his pilgrimage in 1276/1860 and again in 1282/1866, the population of his town saw him off and, on his return, gave him a musical welcome with the band of the local garrison. Sometimes it was not only the men who gathered in the *zāwiya* for the *dhikr* on Thursday evening, but the entire families; on entering the courtyard of the convent built by the Shādhilī/Yashruṭī shaykh Abū'l-Shāmāt in Damascus one can imagine even nowadays, in spite of the decay, how well they must have felt there in the fragrance of the orange-trees.⁵⁸ The 'holy man', as Peter Brown would call him, had been completely integrated into society. Nevertheless, he could still be seen as the outsider who, without being an expert, was able to answer unanswerable questions and to solve conflicts which could not be solved from within.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ On these points cf. the article *Ahrār* by J.M. Rogers in *EIran* I, 667 ff., but now also, in a broader context, Jürgen Paul, *Die politische und soziale Bedeutung der Naqshbandiyya im 15. Jahrhundert* (Berlin 1991) and Florian Schwarz, *Bruderschaften, Gesellschaft, Staat im islamischen Mittelasien (Transoxanien) im 16. Jahrhundert* (PhD thesis Tübingen 1998). For the relationship between prince and saint in Mamluk and early Ottoman Egypt cf. Geoffroy (note 51 above) 119 ff.

⁵⁵ For him cf. Werner Ende, 'Sayyid Abū l-Hudā, ein Vertrauter Abdülhamid's II.', in *Vorträge XIX. Deutscher Orientalistentag = ZDMG Suppl.* iii 2 (Wiesbaden 1977) 1143 ff. and Butrus Abu-Manneh, 'Sultan Abdulḥamīd II and Shaykh Abulhudā Al-Ṣayyādī', *Middle Eastern Studies* xv (1979) 131 ff.

⁵⁶ *EI* vii, 937a s.v. *Naqshbandiyya*; for Gümüşkhanewī cf. now Butrus Abu-Manneh, 'Shaykh Ahmed Ziya'üddin el-Gümüshanevi and the Ziyā'i-Khālīdī Suborder', in F. De Jong (ed.), *Shī'a Islam, Sects and Sufism* (Utrecht 1992) 105 ff.

⁵⁷ Cf. *EI* ii, 878 f.

⁵⁸ Cf. my article in *Die Welt des Islams* xvi (1975) 76. For the later development of the Yashruṭiyya cf. the remarks by P.-J. Luizard in A. Popovic and G. Veinstein (edd.), *Les Voies d'Allah* (Paris 1996) 364 f.

⁵⁹ Peter Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', in id. (ed.),

But where was the opposition when the integration of mysticism had advanced to such an extent? There was, of course, no end to the opposition from within. Thus, for instance, in Iran, the Naqshbandiyya was wiped out by the Şafavids; the order only survived in Sunni areas, among the Kurds and the Uzbeks. The Şafavids had a Sufi origin themselves; in the beginning they were, as far as their concept of the charismatic leader is concerned, much more extremist than the Naqshbandīs had ever been. But in addition to such clashes among relatives, what do we have? As far as I can see, opposition consisted of three forces which, in different areas but during approximately the same period, worked to break up the established integration and were responsible for a complete reversal of the status quo: the Salafiyya for whom mysticism went against their puritanism and scripturalism, the political reformers for whom it went against their secularism and nationalism, and the Europeans for whom it went against their imperialism and colonialism.

European opposition to Sufi orders is only touched upon in a few of the papers to be discussed during this symposium. This may be since the majority of the participants in this gathering are Europeans themselves, and thus would have to reflect upon the principles of their own research. Not that they are unable or always unwilling to do so, but in the prevailing circumstances the topic would fall under a different heading: the concept of the other or the theory of discourse, a subject of all too many scholarly gatherings during recent years. But let us not forget that quite a number of publications considered to be authoritative reports about mystical movements in the beginning of our century were closely linked to colonialism and mirrored its anxieties and prejudices: Depont and Coppolani's *Les confréries religieuses musulmanes* published in Algiers 1897, the works by Duveyrier, Rinn, Le Châtelier and others. As late as 1951, i.e. after the Second World War but still before the independance of the Maghribi states, Georges Drague wrote, in the same spirit, his *Esquisse de l'histoire religieuse du Maroc: confréries et zaouias*.⁶⁰ In the rural areas, the *zāwiyas* functioned as local centers of education; that is why, in addition to the political reasons, the *mission civi-*

Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity (London 1982), especially 130 ff.; an example of effecting a conciliation between two generals, *ibid.* 133.

⁶⁰ The author was a colonial officer, as were his predecessors; for a general outline cf. E. Burke III, 'The Sociology of Islam. The French Tradition', in M.H. Kerr (ed.), *Islamic Studies. A Tradition and its Problems* (Malibu 1980) 73 ff.

lisatrice kept a vigilant eye on them. But French imperialism is by no means the only, if perhaps the most obvious example. Similar observations could be made concerning Italian research about the Sa-nūsiyya in Tripolitania, British publications about Mahdism in the Sudan, etc. (although in the latter case the *ṭarīqas* might occasionally turn up on the good side). We are dealing, as has recently been pointed out again,⁶¹ with a *littérature de surveillance* or, when the writings are produced by British and American missionaries, an 'Islamic Peril' literature.

Have we completely passed beyond this stage? It is true that, for the moment, all the phobia and all the polemics are directed against fundamentalism rather than mysticism, and that it is rather the media which tend to produce a *littérature de surveillance* for public consumption. But as far as our own work is concerned, we should perhaps not forget that part of the documentation we use for Central Asian brotherhoods in our century comes from reports which were compiled by Soviet political commissars.⁶² In itself, of course, this does no harm: Why should one not use Russian sources as well as Arabic or Persian ones? It is only 'the view from outside' which we have to be concerned about, the dangers inherent in the perspective, the evil eye as it were. During this symposium all of us will be applying the view from outside since we are talking about opposition and not about Sufism as such, and since we are talking in sociological or historical terms and not in religious ones. Again, this is nothing detrimental; on the contrary, it may be an expression of 'detached' scholarship. But we must keep in mind that the Sufis themselves looked at things in a different way. Where we see power structures, they talked about *rābiṭa*, the close connexion between the disciple and his shaykh, the urge to become identical with him, the famous — and infamous — *fanā' fī'l-shaykh* criticized by the religious opposition.⁶³ Similarly, where we see only political influence and the will to dominate, they talked about *taṣarruf*, the ability of the shaykh to dispose over other people, and what they meant by this was frequently the magical side of his personality, his power to

⁶¹ Cf. R. Seán O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke, *Der Islam* lxx (1993) 61 ff.

⁶² Cf. the remark by Fritz Meier in *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Naqšbandiyya* (Istanbul 1994) 186. The kind of research I am alluding too is dealt with by Jo-Ann Gross in her article in this volume p. 520 ff.

⁶³ Cf. the first essay in Fritz Meier's book, *Die Herzensbindung an den Meister* 17 ff., and *ibid.* index s.v. *Entwerden im Meister*.

bewitch his enemies.⁶⁴ This was the point which was taken seriously by men of worldly power, perhaps more so than the social influence — although both things cannot be completely separated since the simple people were as superstitious as were the upper classes. The relationship between the shaykh and his followers was compared to that between the Prophet and his Companions;⁶⁵ he was greeted with a prostration, and his feet were kissed.⁶⁶ Timur is said to have tried to keep Ni^cmatullāh-i Walī-i Kirmānī out of his territory, remarking that two kings cannot live together in one and the same clime.⁶⁷

This was a pertinent observation. The Sufis were to experience its truth again when, a few centuries later, this same ‘clime’ succumbed to the influence of ‘enlightened’ European nationalism. The mystical orders did not fit into this new pattern. They had spread all over the Islamic world and could therefore not be confined to the borders of the newly founded states; what had looked cosmopolitan in earlier days looked unpatriotic now. They lost their elite; the Jīlānīs in Baghdad, heirs to the Qādiriyya establishment, joined the Arab nationalist movement in Iraq when they were deprived of power by the Young Turks, and made a new career as politicians and prime ministers.⁶⁸ With respect to late Ottoman Turkey, the tensions which ensued from this and the spiritual uncertainty which befell the *ṭarīqas* themselves have been depicted by Franz Werfel in a chapter of his novel *The Forty Days of the Musa Dagh*, in connection with the persecution of the Armenians. Moreover, the quest for modernity which accompanied nationalism paved the way for European secularism; after that, the mystical orders looked old-fashioned, ‘medieval’, and dangerous because of their appeal to superstition and irrationality. When Vámbéry travelled in Central Asia, he could still observe that the Sufi shaykhs — ‘they’ (*īshān*) as they were called there, *īshān* being a formula of reverence — enjoyed an extremely high prestige, higher than that of the mullahs, since it was the Sufi shaykhs who dispensed blessings and curses, by selling talismans or by their ‘breath’, indeed it was their supernatural power which kept the cattle in good health and the evil spirits at bay.⁶⁹ The new administrative elite, whether foreign (as in Russia or Algeria) or in-

64 Cf. the second essay, *Kraftakt und Faustrecht des Heiligen*, *ibid.* 245 ff.

65 *Ibid.* 106 f.

66 *Ibid.* 148 f.

67 *Ibid.* 245, n. 1.

68 Cf. P.-J. Luizard in *Les Voies d'Allah* (note 58 above) 349 f.

69 *Ibid.* 276.

digenous (as in Turkey or in Iran), had no understanding for this. In their view, humanitarian and civilizational improvement was to be realized by European medicine and European bureaucracy, and in pursuing this goal they frequently asserted their power in an arrogant and therefore brutal manner. Atatürk is, of course, the best example, but by no means the only one. It is a peculiar irony of history that the national self-understanding of certain areas in Central Asia which have emerged as independent states after the dissolution of the Soviet empire, Kazakhstan for instance, appear to be clinging once again to the role the mystical orders played in the past since there is not much else on which to build an identity.⁷⁰

In contrast to nationalism, the Salafiyya, the last one of the three forces of opposition, has tried to do without secularism. But it has not done without arrogance, the arrogance of the reformer who turns back to authenticity, to the roots. Muḥammad ʿAbduh had been associated with the Shādhiliyya, his disciple Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (1865-1935) with the Naqshbandiyya, but they both contemptuously broke with their past. Riḍā reports that when he attended Sufi meetings in his youth, the participants were supposed to see spirits, i.e. to communicate with the souls of the deceased shaykhs and the ancestors of their order. They were even told that they could smell them, obviously in agreement with the famous *ḥadīth* which says that, in the afterlife, the *arwāḥ* recognize each other by their smell like horses.⁷¹ The *ḥadīth*, though, is something which Riḍā does not mention, for the *ḥadīth* would have run counter to the direction of his argument, namely to show that such practices did not agree with pure and original Islam. His polemics were in line with the attitude upheld by Ibn Taymiyya more than half a millennium ago, the attitude of reform and return to the ideal past which had been radicalized in the meantime by the Wahhābiyya.

However, until about 1920 the Wahhābiyya was still a marginal affair, much too peripheral to have any significant impact in Egypt.⁷² What made the call for reform in Egypt so strong was not puritanism

⁷⁰ Cf. also the role of the Qādiriyya in the Chechen war. On the role of Sufi orders in the Caucasus at present see the contribution by Ch. Lemerrier-Quelquejay in *Les Voies d'Allah* 301 ff., now deals with this topic briefly.

⁷¹ Ibid. 208 f.; for the *ḥadīth* cf. Wensinck, *Concordance* i, 385a; a more complete version in Qaṣṭallānī, *Irshād al-sārī* (Cairo 1304) v, 325, l. 15 ff.

⁷² Cf. the article by F. de Jong in this volume, p. 310 ff.; also id., 'Ṭuruq and ṭuruq-opposition in 20th century Egypt', in Frithjof Rundgren (ed.), *Proceedings VIth Congress of Arabic and Islamic Studies* (Visby/Stockholm 1972) (Leiden 1975) 84 ff.

but the belief in reason, more specifically: the belief in a kind of reason which had incorporated technology and slowly repressed the sapiential and spiritual dimension. This explains why the results of the development were so different there from those in the Arabian desert. Ḥanbalī thought had reduced mysticism to pietism, and when Wahhābism finally acquired political importance, in the modern state of Saudi Arabia, Sufi movements — which had spread on the Arabian peninsula before, mainly due to the influence of Aḥmad b. Idrīs — ceased to exist. Aḥmad b. Idrīs's tomb was destroyed after the annexation of ʿAsīr. In Egypt, on the contrary, where Napoleon had still tried to acquire influence by winning over the *shaykh al-sajjāda* of the Bakriyya,⁷³ the *ṭarīqas* came to the surface again when technical reasoning was felt to be inadequate for spiritual satisfaction. As early as 1895, a Supreme Council of the Sufi Brotherhoods was created; in 1976 its organization and functions were regulated by law. There is no parallel to this institution in any other country of the Islamic world; only in Egypt are the *ṭarīqas* legally recognized.

The question is whether, at a certain moment, through the teaching of Aḥmad b. Idrīs and others, the Sufi orders themselves aspired to a goal similar to that of the Wahhābiyya and the Salafiyya, namely the purification of religion from unorthodox doctrines and practices. This is the controversy as to whether there was something which may justifiably be called 'Neo-Sufism'. The debate has just been started.⁷⁴ One of the points Sufism and Neo-Sufism have in common is their highly accentuated veneration for the Prophet Muḥammad. Of course in certain respects such a tendency ought not be at all surprising, but it seems to have increased over the centuries.⁷⁵ The way it is expressed differs in both cases. In mysticism we would have to concentrate on the famous but still somewhat vaguely perceived *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya*,⁷⁶ whereas in the Salafiyya it is the

⁷³ Cf. now J.W. Livingstone in: *Studia Islamica* lxxx (1994) 125 ff.

⁷⁴ Cf. R. Séan O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke, 'Neo-Sufism Reconsidered', *Der Islam* lxx (1993) 52 ff.

⁷⁵ A good way of testing this hypothesis would be a closer study of how heresy was defined at different periods, whether there was a shift in concern from scandalous statements about God (dualism or monism for instance) to statements vilifying the Prophet. But this work still remains to be done.

⁷⁶ Cf. now the remarks by Bernd Radtke *Die Welt des Islams* xxxvi (1996) 353 ff. An early example (ninth/fifteenth century) of unusually intense contact between a mystic and the Prophet, through dreams, which seems to replace the *fanāʾ* in God has recently been analyzed by J.G. Katz, *Dreams, Sufism and Sainthood. The Visionary Career of Muhammad al-Zawāwī* (Leiden 1996). For Egypt cf. also Geoffroy (note 51 above) 101 ff.

discovery of Muḥammad's role for Islamic identity, as the founder of the community in the political as well as the legal sense, which comes to the fore. What is connected with it is, among other things, the relationship between mysticism and what is called fundamentalism in our time. That the Salafiyya wanted to go back to the fundamentals of Islam is beyond doubt, but it is equally obvious that, in certain parts of the Islamic world, in Syria for instance, mystical trends and brotherhoods are nowadays employed to impede fundamentalist influence. Before entering this discussion, however, a primary clarification of terms is indispensable. It is not only that we must make clear what we mean when we use the word 'fundamentalism' (or any other word we may try to replace it with); we must also define mysticism and Sufism (which are by no means interchangeable expressions), and we will have to explain what a Sufi brotherhood nowadays stands for in contrast to a charitable organization run by so-called fundamentalists.⁷⁷ And once we start defining our terms we have to take into account our own world, its different kind of spirituality and its non-religious, at times even anti-religious mode of discourse.

These are problems which may remain problems for us even after this symposium has ended; they are too general to be approached by means of a sequence of isolated papers. But they underlie much of what we will be talking about, and in a certain way they may well determine the language we use. For we shall be mostly talking in sociological and political terms. Poetry will not have a place in our discourse, nor will the language of spirituality lead us astray. But who knows? Maybe at a certain moment in the proceedings the three Qalandars will suddenly march in. Beyond all forms of academic orgy, they know the real story, and they are always good for a surprise.

⁷⁷ Statistics do not exist concerning the membership of contemporary Sufi *ṭarīqas* in different countries and regions; but cf. G. Veinstein in *Les Voies d'Allah* 20 f.

I

PERIMETERS AND CONSTANTS

EARLY SUFISM BETWEEN PERSECUTION AND HERESY

GERHARD BÖWERING

The Muslim mystics of classical Sufism — from the beginnings of Islamic asceticism to the time of al-Ghazzālī — did not challenge their opponents with an agenda of the just society, a blueprint of political reform or a call for an Islamic state. Instead, they saw this world, Allah's creation, as a transitory home, a theater of trial and tribulation, a situation to overcome rather than to organize and enjoy. Fully aware of the injustices of this world, they were intent on reaching God, the sole source and goal of justice and the only ruler and lord of the world to come. They identified the root and cause of injustice as within man and devised ways to conquer evil by spiritual renewal, termed *tawba*, 'repentance and inner conversion'. Far from understanding *tawba* simply as conversion from one organized religion to another, the Sufis perceived it as a dynamic principle of radical reorientation to God that made them abandon the false ways of this world and follow the straight path to God. This path to God was rooted in the powerful impulse of the Koran as a call to direct encounter with the one God in His speech. There is neither mediator nor bridge between God and man in the act of listening to the Koranic word. The classical Sufis claimed unequivocal witness to this direct encounter with divine speech by hearing the divine Speaker beyond His word. For this reason, they saw themselves as occupying a place similar to that of the Prophet, the prototypical hearer of the Koranic word. Through this divine word the Sufis discovered in the symbolism of *tawba* a powerful paradigm to capture their unmediated encounter with God. They found means to interpret it as an expression of their direct, personal experience of the Divine, as the mutual turning of Creator and creature to one another.

This interpretation of *tawba* can be traced in Sufi accounts of conversion — stories which reveal the why and how of an individual's choice of the Sufi way of life. A paradigmatic selection of these stories, drawn from the hagiographies of five early Sufis, exhibits a basic symbolism which accounts for the radical and lasting life changes that these stories recount. Rather than recording a sequence of actual historical occurrences, these stories embody the perceived historical memory of Sufi posterity, sometimes embellished for purposes of instruction and emulation. For the protagonist, however, they were events of self-perception, rooted in a powerful core of personal memory and expressed in a striking symbolism.

Rapidly surveying these well-known life stories, one discerns the legends that this literature has woven around the typical figures. The legend of Ibrāhīm b. Adham (d. 161/777-8), an Arab of the Banū ʿIjl, is especially rich in detail.¹ Escaping the turmoil of Abū Muslim's revolt in 129/747, Ibrāhīm leaves his wife and their wealthy family estate at Balkh, gives up his royal palace, his silken robe, his golden bed, his favorite steed and his pastime of hunting gazelles. Meeting a stranger, or in another account, hearing a voice from the pommel of his saddle calling him to repentance, he changes his life drastically, dons sack-cloth, for some years dwells in a cave hermitage, walks all the way to Mecca as a pilgrim, forswears begging to earn his bread by manual labor, follows a celibate way of life, attracts many students and becomes the principal prototype of the Syrian ascetical tradition. Finally, he dies a martyr in holy war, pursuing Byzantine infidels on the borders and shores of Syria.

In similar fashion the rich landlord and merchant Shaqīq al-Balkhī (d. 194/809), a member of the Arab tribe of the Banū Azd,² parts

¹ R. Jones, *Ibrāhīm b. Adham*, EI, iii, 985-986; for an extract of Ibrāhīm's *Musnad*, extant in manuscript, cf. GAS i, 215. Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʿūṭ and ʿAlī Abū Zayd (Beirut 1409/1988) vii, 387-396; al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-Islām*, years 161-170, ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmūrī (Beirut 1411/1990) 43-59; Abū ʿAbd al-Rahmān Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, ed. J. Pedersen (Leiden 1960) 13-22; ed. N. Shurayba (Cairo 1389/1969) 27-38; Abū Nuʿaym al-Isfahānī, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ* (Cairo 1937-38) vii, 365-395; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, Facsimile Dār al-Bashīr (Amman n. d.) ii, 370-408; Farīd al-Dīn-i ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyāʾ*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (London-Leiden 1905) i, 85-106; R. A. Nicholson, 'Ibrāhīm b. Adham', *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* xxvi (1912) 215-220; Richard Gramlich, *Alte Vorbilder des Sufitums* (Wiesbaden 1995) i, 135-282.

² Cf. P. Nwyia, *Trois oeuvres inédites de mystiques musulmans* (Beirut 1973) 13-22 (an Arabic text edition of a small tract entitled *Ādāb al-ʿibādāt* that is ascribed to Shaqīq al-Balkhī); Ḥātim b. ʿUnwān al-Aṣamm (d. 237/851-2) transmitted Shaqīq's *Thamānī masāʾil*,

with the companions of his extravagant youth, abandons his market and merchandise and exchanges his costly robes for a poor man's woollen dress. He then leads an ascetic life, travels to many centers of Muslim learning in search of knowledge and studies with a great variety of religious authorities in Iran, Iraq, Arabia, Syria and Egypt. Achieving wide renown as a teacher of trust in God (*tawakkul*), he compiles learned writings on a great variety of religious topics and gathers a circle of disciples in Khurasan, on whom he exerts a lasting influence as the earliest teacher of the East-Iranian tradition of asceticism. Again, like Ibrāhīm, Shaqīq proves his mettle as a valiant and fearless warrior in holy war and is slain fighting Turkish infidels between Khuttalān and Wāshgird on the upper Oxus river in the borderlands of north-eastern Iran.

A third example is the son of a prisoner of war and slave from Si-jistan, Mālik b. Dīnār (d. 131/749) of Basra,³ who repents upon hearing a mysterious voice as he strikes a few cords on his lute one night. An alternative, rather more poignant story traces his repentance back to a dream he had after spending the night drinking wine. At one time, he had purchased a female slave who caught his fancy. She bore him a daughter who died in infancy. Desperate to find relief from despair at the child's death, Mālik beholds the scene of the Resurrection in his delirium and his daughter, clad in light, calling him to repentance as she chases away a threatening dragon.⁴ Becoming an ascetic, Mālik lives in modest quarters with neither lock nor key, and wears simple clothes, a sheepskin or a woollen coat. Well-acquainted with Jewish-Christian scriptures, he earns his livelihood making papyrus sheets and copying the Koran, observes protracted prayer vigils, writes a book on asceticism (*zuhd*) and dies in the year that an epidemic of plague ravages Basra.

Two other stories of early Sufi conversions reiterate similar motifs. The highway robber Fuḍayl b. ʿIyād (d. 187/803), a native of Samar-

partially extant in manuscript, cf. GAS i, 639. Al-Dhahabī, *Ṣiyar* ix, 313-316; *Taʾrīkh al-Islām* (years 191-200) 227-232; al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, ed. J. Pedersen, 54-59; ed. N. Shurayba, 61-66; Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ* viii, 58-73; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq* viii, 94-102; ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyāʾ* i, 196-202. J. van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra* (Berlin-New York 1992) ii, 545-549; Gramlich, *Alte Vorbilder* ii, 13-62.

³ Ch. Pellat, *Mālik b. Dīnār*, EI vi, 266-267; GAS i, 634; Gramlich, *Alte Vorbilder* i, 59-122; al-Dhahabī, *Ṣiyar* v, 362-364; *Taʾrīkh al-Islām* (years 131-140), 214-217; Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ* ii, 357-389; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq* vi, 181-205; ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyāʾ* i, 40-48.

⁴ Ibn Qudāma, *Kitāb al-tawwābīn*, ed. G. Makdisi (Damascus 1961) 193-195.

qand who grew up in Abīward and belonged to the Banū Tamīm, renounces his life of robbery and rape to study *ḥadīth* at Kufa. Later he settles permanently as an ascetic in close proximity to the Ka^ʿba at Mecca (*mujāwir*).⁵ Bishr al-Ḥāfi (d. 227/841), a native of Marw who came to Baghdad, turns his back on an excessive life-style and a lust for women and wine, abandons his studies and buries his books to become a destitute mendicant, reported to have lived barefoot and in hunger.⁶

In each of the five paradigmatic hagiographies the life change is embedded in a patterned scenario: an unforeseeable, sudden event shocks the individual; shaken by doubt or overcome by fear, he turns away from this world, abruptly abandons his accustomed way of life, repents and turns totally to God. The central event itself possesses mysterious qualities. A fire is kindled in Ibrāhīm's soul; Shaqīq wakes up as if struck by a flash of insight; Mālik hears the call of a mysterious voice; an arrow pierces Fuḍayl's heart; and Bishr is visited by someone calling in a dream. In each case, symbolic figures mark the turning point. Ibrāhīm happens upon a mysterious stranger on the roof top and in the halls of his house or encounters a beggar in his palace yard who is content with the modest daily ration God provides. Shaqīq meets a clean-shaven monk in saffron robes in a Buddhist temple of Central Asia who, although an idolater, teaches him the true meaning of the divine Sustainer. Mālik meets the angelic figure of his deceased daughter in a dream. Fuḍayl realizes God's presence and remembrance through someone's solemn recital of a Koranic verse. Bishr finds a piece of paper in the gutter with God's name written on it.

These symbolic figures both conceal and reveal the powerful divine intervention that changes the Sufi's life. Though veiling the direct action of God, these symbolic figures manifest the actual presence of the Transcendent who is apprehended directly in mystic experience as ultimate reality, albeit 'through a glass darkly'. Sufis of later centuries had the courage and freedom to express their spiritual

⁵ M. Smith, *Fuḍayl b. ʿIyād*, EI, ii, 936; GAS i, 634; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* viii, 372-390; *Taʾrīkh al-Islām* (years 181-190) 331-344; al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, ed. J. Pedersen, 7-12; ed. N. Shurayba, 6-14; Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ* viii, 84-139; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq* xiv, 256-289; ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyāʾ* i, 74-85.

⁶ Cf. F. Meier, *Bishr al-Ḥāfi*, EI i, 1244-1246; GAS i, 638; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* x, 469-477; *Taʾrīkh al-Islām* (years 221-230) 105-113; al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, ed. J. Pedersen, 33-40; ed. N. Shurayba, 39-47; Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ* viii, 336-360; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq* iii, 310-338; ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyāʾ* i, 106-114.

life-history in full-fledged autobiographies. The early Sufis, however, collected their spiritual itineraries as short fragments of memory about the first break-through of the Divine into their lives. As a constant in all five life stories, one finds the common elements of direct encounter with God and radical change of life: it is as if the two-sided nature of the Koranic *tawba*,⁷ i.e. God's act of restoring man to divine mercy and man's act of turning to God in repentance, was dramatically actualized in the lives of these mystics.

The root *t-w-b* constructed with the prepositions *ʿan* or *min* does not occur in the Koran. It refers to the process of man's turning away from sin and error rather than to a distinct crucial event at the beginning of a Sufi calling. This latter usage becomes a focal point in Sufi discussions about the theory of *tawba*, as it denotes most incisively the turning away from this world and describes the ideal of an ascetic way of life.⁸ As the acts of external worship require outer and legal purity (*ṭahāra*), so the Sufis felt, a person drawing near to God requires inner purification (*tawba*). The first is performed by actual ablution with water, the second by inward remorse and penitence. The Sufis observed that human beings in general were heedless in following the path to God, egoistic in their attitude and conduct toward others, and inclined to all kinds of sin (*dhanb*, pl. *dhunūb*), as mentioned in the Koran: minor sins, grave sins, unbelief (*kufṛ*) and

⁷ For a brief discussion of *tawba* in the Koran, see the Appendix to the present article.

⁸ As a rule, the early Sufi handbooks include chapters on *tawba*; cf. Abū Naṣr ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlī al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ fiʾl-taṣawwuf*, ed. R.A. Nicholson (Leiden-London 1914) 43-44; cf. R. Gramlich, *Schlaglichter über das Sufitum* (Stuttgart 1990) 87-88; Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Iṣḥāq al-Kalābādhi, *Kitāb al-taʿarruf li-madḥih ahl al-taṣawwuf*, ed. A.J. Arberry (Cairo 1352/1933) 64-65; cf. G. C. Anawati and L. Gardet, *Mystique musulmane* (Paris 1968) 147-159; Abū Ṭālib Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb fi muʿāmalat al-maḥbūb* (Cairo 1381/1961) i, 364-394; cf. R. Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen* (Stuttgart 1992-95) ii, 9-52; Abūʾl-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Hawāzin al-Qushayrī, *al-Risāla*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and Maḥmūd b. al-Sharīf (Cairo 1972-74) i, 253-263; cf. R. Gramlich, *Das Sendschreiben al-Quṣayrīs über das Sufitum* (Wiesbaden 1989) 146-154; R. Hartmann, *Al-Kuschairis Darstellung des Sufitums* (Berlin 1914) 110-11; Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* (Cairo 1358/1939) iv, 2-59; cf. S. Wilzer, 'Untersuchungen zu Ghazzālīs Kitāb at-Tauba', *Der Islam* xxxii (1957) 237-309; xxxiii (1958) 51-120; xxxiv (1959) 128-137; R. Gramlich, *Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī's Lehre von den Stufen zur Gottesliebe* (Wiesbaden 1984) 19-135; M.S. Stern, 'Notes on the theology of al-Ghazzālī's concept of repentance', *Islamic Quarterly* xxiii (1979) 82-98. An early small tract on *tawba* is the *Kitāb badʾ man anāba ilā Allāh taʿālā*, ed. H. Ritter (Glückstadt 1935) by Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥārith b. Asad al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857); cf. also J. van Ess, *Die Gedankenwelt des Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī* (Bonn 1961) 63, 126, 130-131, 140-142, 188.

idolatry (*shirk*).⁹ For the Sufis, sin had its roots in disobedience (*maʿṣiya*) to the divine law and persistence in wrongdoing (*iṣrār*). In adopting the theological definition of *tawba* as ‘regret for an act of disobedience, combined with the firm intention of avoiding it in the future’,¹⁰ some Sufis inclined toward the Muʿtazilī view that, because of His justice, God is bound to accept the sinner’s sincere repentance, and others to the Ashʿarī view that the Almighty has absolute freedom to grant or refuse forgiveness to the sinner.

Going a step further in their early manuals, the Sufis offered a minute analysis of sin and established catalogues of sins; ranging from al-Makki’s enumeration of principal sins¹¹ — arrogance, envy, greed and anger — to al-Ghazzālī’s detailed lists that divide sins into those stemming from the heart, the tongue, the belly and other bodily organs.¹² Other Sufi theorists developed refined distinctions concerning *tawba*, usually employing a threefold pattern, which al-Hujwīrī synchronized and telescoped into succinct three-point maxims.¹³ Sin and repentance were treated as relative concepts, keyed to the level of an individual’s spiritual progress. The differential scale of *tawba* for the common people (*al-ʿawāmm*), the elect (*al-khawāṣṣ*), and the gnostics (*ahl al-maʿrifa*) is traced back by al-Sarrāj and al-Kalābādhī to statements of Dhūʿl-Nūn al-Miṣrī (d. 245/859) and Abūʿl-Ḥusayn al-Nūrī (d. 295/907-8).¹⁴ Dhūʿl-Nūn coined the Sufi catchwords, ‘the sins of those drawn near to God (*al-muqarrabūn*) are the good deeds of the pious (*al-abrār*)’¹⁵ and ‘the common people repent from sin and the elect from heedlessness’,¹⁶ while al-Nūrī held that ‘repen-

⁹ A.J. Wensinck and L. Gardet, *Khaṭīʿa*, EI iv, 1106-1109; E. Sell, *Sin (Muslim)*, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* xi, 567-569.

¹⁰ Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Tahānawī, *Kitāb kashshāf iṣṭilāḥāt al-funūn*, ed. A. Sprenger (Calcutta 1854) i, 162; cf. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-taʿrīfāt*, ed. G. Flügel (Leipzig 1845) 39, 74; M. Gloton, *Kitāb al-taʿrīfāt: ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Jurjānī* (Tehran 1994) 96, 142-143.

¹¹ Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen* ii, 46-48; iii, 213-227; iv, 227-228, 239.

¹² al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyāʾ* iv, 28; cf. Gramlich, *Muḥammad al-Gazzālī’s Lehre* 50-62.

¹³ Abūʿl-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʿUthmān al-Hujwīrī al-Jullābī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, ed. V. Zhukovski (Tehran 1399/1979) 380-382; R.A. Nicholson, *The Kashf al-maḥjūb* (London 1936) 294-295.

¹⁴ al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ* 44; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 88; al-Kalābādhī cites Dhūʿl-Nūn as having reserved the third degree for the prophets (*al-anbiyāʾ*), cf. *Kitāb al-taʿarruf* 64; A.J. Arberry, *The Doctrine of the Sufis* (Cambridge 1935) 83.

¹⁵ al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ* 44; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 88.

¹⁶ al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ* 44; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 88; al-Kalābādhī, *Kitāb al-taʿarruf* 64; Arberry, *Doctrine* 83.

tance is repenting of everything except God'.¹⁷ Three degrees of repentance, *tawba*, *ināba* and *awba*, each with a successively higher motive, fear of divine punishment, desire for divine reward, and obedience to God's command for its own sake, were cited in this ascending order of perfection by al-Qushayrī's teacher Abū 'Alī al-Daqqāq (d. 405/1015).¹⁸ The distinction of specific *termini a quo* for repentance from sin, from heedlessness and from everything other than God (i.e. from one's own self and, particularly, from attention to one's good deeds) became a standard Sufi tenet.¹⁹

The differentiation between the repentance of the believers (*al-mu'minūn*), the repentance of the saints, God's friends (*awliyā' Allāh*), and the repentance of the prophets (*al-anbiyā'*)²⁰ ran into the difficulty of the delicate antinomy between the dogma of sinless prophets and the Koranic citation of their transgressions. To be sure, there were Sufi trends that developed to the extreme left and right of these classifications, one lax and the other rigid. The Ibāhiyya asserted that anyone who attains to union with God no longer lives in fear of sin or worries about the prescriptions of the law.²¹ In their scrupulous fear of shunning the praise of men, the Malāmatiyya indulged in actions certain to appear scandalous in the sight of others so as to provoke their blame and rebuke.²²

A central aim of the Sufi handbooks, however, was to convey the good counsel of the Sufi masters on the necessity of avoiding the slightest voluntary sin to the point of scrupulosity (*wara'*) in one's heart.²³ The preferred means of maintaining this refined sense of sin was the examination of one's conscience (*muḥāsabat al-nafs*), because the human heart was seen as a mirror that must be cleansed and polished of any rust spoiling it.²⁴ More importantly, however,

¹⁷ al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-luma'* 44; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 88.

¹⁸ al-Qushayrī, *al-Risāla* i, 258; Gramlich, *Sendschreiben* 150; al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-mahjūb* 379-380; R.A. Nicholson, *The Kashf al-mahjūb* 295.

¹⁹ al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-luma'* 44; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 88; al-Kalābādhi, *Kitāb al-ta'arruf* 64; Arberry, *Doctrine* 83.

²⁰ al-Kalābādhi, *Kitāb al-ta'arruf* 64; Arberry, *Doctrine* 83; al-Qushayrī, *al-Risāla* i, 258; Gramlich, *Sendschreiben* 150; al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-mahjūb* 379-380; R.A. Nicholson, *The Kashf al-mahjūb* 295.

²¹ W. Madelung and M.G.S. Hodgson, *Ibāha*, EI iii, 662-663;

²² F. de Jong and H. Algar, *Malāmatiyya*, EI vi, 223-225.

²³ al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-luma'* 44-46; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 88-90; al-Qushayrī, *al-Risāla* i, 284-291; Gramlich, *Sendschreiben* 170-176.

²⁴ R. Deladrière, *Muḥāsaba*, EI vii, 465; van Ess, *Gedankenwelt*, 139-143; al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb* i, 157-168; Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen* i, 271-28. The practice actually

the disquisitions about sin and repentance led to a divisive controversy within early Sufism. Sahl al-Tustarī and his followers in Basra held that *tawba* means ‘that you do not forget your sin’, while al-Junayd and his group in Baghdad maintained that *tawba* means ‘that you forget your sin’.²⁵ Sahl al-Tustarī stressed that man should be always aware of his sin so as to be able to turn to God with every breath, while al-Junayd understood the mystic to be so totally turned to God that he forgets about his sin.

This controversy marked a deep divide within early Sufism about the Sufi’s fundamental attitude toward God. It separated the more ascetically-minded exoteric mystics of Basra who stressed spiritual struggle on the path to God (*mujāhada*), from the more mystically-inclined esoteric mystics of Baghdad who strove for mystical vision of God (*mushāhada*). Eventually, Sufism inclined toward its more esoteric direction and saw the subtleties of *tawba* encapsulated in a powerful image: ‘*Tawba* means that you should be unto God a face without a back, even as you have formerly been unto Him a back without a face’.²⁶

Beginning with the classical Sufi manuals, there is also evidence that *tawba* even crystallized into a Sufi ritual administered by the shaykh. As a ritual it included regulated physical postures and formulae of asking for God’s forgiveness in the spiritual master’s presence. Few of the details of these rites are known and some are mentioned only implicitly in the sources, but nevertheless they may be seen as forerunners of the standard rituals of *tawba* practiced in the later Sufi orders upon initiation into the fraternity and at moments of confessing sins in the presence of the brethren.²⁷ It is important to note that, already in classical Sufism, *tawba* as a ritual practice was probably concluded by the *bay‘a*, the hand-clasp that re-established loyalty and authority with binding effect.²⁸ In early Sufism *tawba* was thus not only a dramatic experience of conversion and an ascetic ideal of rejecting the world, but a routinized and repeatable practice

reflects the mystic’s consciousness of being called by God to give an inward account of one’s actions. It is often understood in close association with the practice of “keeping God before one’s eyes” (*murāqaba*) that focuses the mystic totally on God; cf. al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb* i, 182-193; Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen* i, 307-322; al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā’* iv, 381-409.

²⁵ al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-luma’* 43; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 87; al-Kalābādhi, *Kitāb al-ta‘arruf* 64.

²⁶ al-Kalābādhi, *Kitāb al-ta‘arruf* 65.

²⁷ R. Gramlich, *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens. Dritter Teil: Brauchtum und Riten* (Wiesbaden 1981) 26-28, 94-95.

²⁸ E. Tyan, *Bay‘a*, EI i, 1113-1114.

of spiritual renewal. As Sufism became ever more organized in the communal life of its orders (*ṭarīqa*), *tawba* increasingly became a moment of education in the shaykh's instruction of the novice (*murīd*) and thereby lost its original quality of a direct, though veiled encounter with the Transcendent. There is no doubt, however, that in the early centuries of Sufism *tawba* marked the decisive and crucial moment at the very beginning of a Sufi career. This explains why the Sufis embraced *tawba* as the first stage (*maqām*) on their path to God and understood their own place in history according to the *ḥadīth*, that the time of Islam is *zamān al-tawba*, the time of radical reorientation to God.

This radical reorientation to God brought the classical Sufis into conflict with large segments of that society on which they had turned their back. They were perceived as men who saw themselves as an elite, a group possessing higher knowledge and attaining a higher control over their own selves than the common Muslims. They proclaimed their path to be a *jihād* greater than the most valiant effort in battle and called their discipline a violent conquest of this world, the lower self and the forces of Satan. They valued the spiritual journey to God deep within their own hearts over and above the pilgrimage to God's house in Mecca. They chose practices for their way of life, such as particular forms of dress, routines of fasting, periods of retreat, exercises of mortification, and modes of seclusion that set them apart. Manifesting such unaccustomed behavior, they alienated society at large and were unable to find wide popular support.

The Sufis' visible, though marginal, presence in society was not only a reminder to everyone of the seriousness of their claims, it also particularly antagonized the scholars of law and religion. Seeing themselves as divinely chosen people, as God's Friends (*awliyāʾ*) and saints, the Sufis held their spiritual achievement to be equal to the experience of the prophets and laid claim to a reciprocal relationship of love with their Creator. Seeking deep mystical insight, which could be communicated only under the mantle of secrecy, they traced their ontological advent to the dawn of creation, when God entered into covenant with their primeval forms prior to fashioning mankind, and granted them the first act of intellect in their primeval profession of divine oneness (*tawḥīd*).²⁹ They couched their mystical insights in phrases and paradoxes that startled the scholars. From the

²⁹ G. Böwering, *The Mystical Vision of Existence in Classical Islam* (Berlin-New York 1980) 145-157; M. Molé, *Les mystiques musulmans* (Paris 1982) 27-35.

moment of their *tawba*, they believed themselves to enjoy a direct access to God which other human beings were not privileged to possess. In this manner the Sufis entered upon a course of conflict with the ordinary believers. They consciously provoked the learned in society with their claims to be a chosen elite.

This conflictual situation may be illustrated by examples of Sufis who mainly lived in the third century of Islam. Some of them suffered the full brunt of this conflict through denunciations, charges of heresy or accusations of unbelief. Others were exiled, imprisoned, tortured or put to death. Abū Sulayman al-Dārānī (d. 215/830) was expelled from Syria for claiming to have had a vision of angels.³⁰ Abū Ḥamza al-Baghdādī (d. 269/882-3) was ostracized for declaring that he found God in the whistling of the wind and the crowing of the cock.³¹ Abū Yazīd al-Baṣṭāmī (d. 261/874-5) was exiled from his home town for claiming to have experienced a heavenly ascension analogous to that of the Prophets.³² Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥusayn b. Bakr al-Ṣubayḥī, a contemporary of Sahl al-Tustarī, was accused of unbelief by leading Shāfiʿī divines and forced to leave Basra.³³ Abū Bakr al-Shiblī (d. 334/946), a well-to-do ʿAbbāsīd official who gave up his lucrative post of prefect of Damāwand to become a learned Mālikī Sufi teacher, was thought to be insane, either by disposition or by design, and because of his outrageous utterances was eventually confined to an insane asylum by the vizier ʿAlī b. ʿĪsā (d. 334/946).³⁴ Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī (d. some time after 320/932) was driven out of seventy towns before he found safe quarters in Khurasan, first in Abīward and then in Marw.³⁵

It would be too simplistic to assume that all these cases of conflict occurred between Sufis and non-Sufi opponents. Rather, it appears that some aspects of these conflicts were an intra-Sufi affair, pitting rival Sufis against each other and drawing the government into their quarrels and arguments. One personality, who came from Wāsiṭ to Baghdad in 264/877, stands out in this regard. He is Ghulām Khalīl,

³⁰ Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa'l-nihāya* (Beirut 1405/1984) x, 270, traces the story back to al-Sulamī's *Miḥan al-mashā'ikh*; see also R. Gramlich, 'Abū Sulaymān ad-Dārānī', *Oriens xxxiii* (1992) 22-85.

³¹ A.J. Arberry, *Pages from the Kitāb al-lumaʿ* (London 1947) 6; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 551.

³² H. Ritter, *Abū Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī*, EI i, 162-163.

³³ Arberry, *Pages* 9; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 549.

³⁴ al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ* 396-407; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 535-548.

³⁵ al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya* 302.

who died in Baghdad in 275/888-9 but was buried in Basra.³⁶ An ascetic scholar of *ḥadīth* and a gifted preacher, Ghulām Khalīl represented the people of *al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf* who watched over public conduct and enjoined the good and forbade evil. Taking offense at the Sufi talk of mutual love between the Creator and His creature, he denounced al-Nūrī (see following paragraph) and his companions before the caliphal court and had government agents arrest some seventy of them.³⁷ Besides a possible personal rivalry, it appears as if Ghulām Khalīl may well represent the opposition of a deeply ascetic and traditional religiosity against the views of al-Nūrī as an exponent of a more gnostic and mystically inspired spirituality.

Abū'l-Husayn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Nūrī,³⁸ born in Baghdad and educated by Sarī al-Saqatī (d. 251/865), became one of the most prominent Sufis in the city and received the honorific titles 'commander of the hearts' and 'moon of the Sufis' from his fellow mystics on account of his subtle mystical knowledge and his shining face. In 264/877-8 Ghulām Khalīl accused al-Nūrī of heresy before al-Muwaffaq (d. 278/891), the caliphal regent and brother of the caliph al-Mu'tamid (256-79/870-92).³⁹ Successfully responding to accusations centered on his belief in reciprocal love between God and the mystic, al-Nūrī was released after an interrogation by the judge Ismā'il b. Ishāq al-Ḥammādī (d. 282/896) and took refuge in Raqqa for fourteen years. Three specific accusations are highlighted in the sources: his claim of reciprocal love ('I am in love with God and He with me'), his beginning to pray upon hearing the barking of a dog while cursing the muezzin ('stab and poison him!'), and his claim of meeting God in his house ('I am with God, whether I am at home or in an open field'). Al-Nūrī countered each accusation with a Koranic verse: 'He loves them and they love Him' (5/54); 'Nothing is, that does not proclaim His praise' (17/44); 'We [i.e. God] are nearer to him [i.e. man] than the jugular vein' (59/16).⁴⁰ In his old age, al-Nūrī

³⁶ For Abū 'Abdallāh Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ghālīb al-Bāhili al-Baṣrī, known as Ghulām Khalīl, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xiii, 282-285; *Ta'rikh al-Islām* (years 261-280) 276-278. His *Kitāb sharḥ al-sunna* is extant in manuscript, see GAS i, 511; see also van Ess, *Theologie und Geschichte* iv, 281-8.

³⁷ Arberry, *Pages* 5; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 549.

³⁸ A. Schimmel, *Abu'l-Husayn al-Nūrī*, EI viii, 139-140; GAS i, 650; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xiv, 70-77; *Ta'rikh al-Islām* (years 291-300) 66-72; for his short treatise, *Maqāmat al-qulūb*, see P. Nwyia, *Textes mystiques inédits* 117-143; Gramlich, *Alte Vorbilder* ii, 381-446.

³⁹ al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xiv, 71;

⁴⁰ Arberry, *Pages* 5; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 549.

returned to Baghdad, weak and partially blind, and met with the Sufis forming al-Junayd's circle in the Shunūziyya Mosque. He died either in the ruins outside Baghdad or after lying unnoticed for days in the corner of a mosque, or by another account, of self-inflicted wounds received while running barefoot into a freshly cut reedbed in a moment of ecstasy.⁴¹

Two other decisive instances when the government was drawn into Sufi quarrels involved al-Ḥallāj (d. 309/922), who was convicted after a public trial and condemned to an excruciating death,⁴² and Abu'l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Adamī, known as Ibn ʿAṭāʾ (d. 309/922), a renowned Ḥanbalī Suf of Baghdad. Ibn ʿAṭāʾ was at first a companion of al-Junayd (d. 297-8/910-11) and then became a close friend of al-Ḥallāj and a rival of Abū Muḥammad al-Jurayrī (d. 311/924), al-Junayd's successor as leader of the Sufi circle of Baghdad.⁴³ Especially known for his jealous love of God, Ibn ʿAṭāʾ was highly respected among the Sufis for his subtle interpretation of the Koran and his deep mystical union with God. He is further said to have lost his wife, his ten sons and all his possessions under violent circumstances, perhaps when their caravan was ambushed on a pilgrimage to Mecca.⁴⁴ Possibly against the background of such painful experiences, Ibn ʿAṭāʾ engaged in intra-Sufi controversies, maintaining, against al-Junayd, that ecstasy was caused by sorrow rather than joy, and asserting, against al-Junayd and al-Jurayrī, that wealth held pride of place over poverty as a Sufi ideal.⁴⁵ While such heated altercations earned him the curse of al-Junayd, his public rebuke of the vizier Ḥāmid b. al-ʿAbbās (d. 311/924) (not ʿAlī b. ʿĪsā as al-Sarrāj says), possibly in defense of statements by al-Ḥallāj, so enraged the vizier that he had the outspoken mystic brutally beaten to death.⁴⁶

Two other examples, which indicate intense conflict within Sufi circles and illustrate the link between Sufi polemics and politics, are the earlier cases of Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī and Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz.

⁴¹ al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ* 210, 290; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 324, 418.

⁴² His case has been studied extensively by L. Massignon, *The Passion of al-Ḥallāj* (Princeton 1982). See also L. Massignon/L. Gardet, *al-Ḥallāj*, EI iii, 99-104.

⁴³ al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt*, ed. J. Pedersen, 260-268; ed. N. Shurayba 265-272; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xiv, 255-256; *Taʾriḫ al-Islām* (years 301-320) 247-248; cf. Gramlich, *Abu l-ʿAbbās b. ʿAṭāʾ*, *Sufi und Koranausleger* (Stuttgart 1995) 1-10.

⁴⁴ al-Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy-i Ḥabībī (Kabul 1340) 295; ʿAṭṭār, *Tadhkira* ii, 68.

⁴⁵ al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb* i, 201; Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen* ii, 74.

⁴⁶ Arberry, *Pages* 9; Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 555; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xiv, 256; *Taʾriḫ al-Islām* (years 301-320) 248.

Dhū'l-Nūn (d. at Jiza between 245/859 and 248/862) lived mainly in Lower-Egypt (Miṣr). He visited Mecca and traveled extensively in Palestine and Syria, becoming familiar with yrian asceticism.⁴⁷ His most influential contributions to Sufism remain his teaching on ecstasy (*wajd*) and gnosis (*maʿrifa*), and his description of the soul's journey to God along a path of stages and states, frequently called the 'seven steps' of the Sufi path. He defined the Sufi gnostics (*ʿarīfūn*) as those who exist in God and contemplate His Face within their hearts, so that He reveals Himself to them in a way not accorded to others. Although Dhū'l-Nūn's notion of *maʿrifa* seems to reflect his own mystical experience of inner religious knowledge of God, later Persian mystics tended to view him as an early Muslim exponent of a Hellenistic theory of gnosis.⁴⁸ During his lifetime he met with opposition from the Muʿtazila and from the Mālikī jurists of Egypt, among them ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (d. 214/829) who condemned him for public teaching about mystical experience. The Muʿtazila forced him to leave Egypt in 228/843 during the *mihna*. He was brought to Sāmarrāʾ to preach at the court of caliph al-Mutawakkil (232-47/847-61) and may have been imprisoned in Baghdād for a short while, presumably for maintaining the 'uncreatedness' of the Koran. After being released on al-Mutawakkil's orders, he returned to Egypt. The case of Dhū'l-Nūn illustrates the controversial nature of the knowledge the Sufis claimed to have received as intuition and inner revelation.

Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz (d. in Egypt in 286/899), a leading figure in the Sufi circles of Baghdad, became an outstanding exponent of classical Sufi theory and was called 'the tongue of Sufism' by his contemporaries. Born in Baghdad, al-Kharrāz studied with prominent Sufis of his time and traveled extensively, visiting the major Muslim cities of Iraq, Syria, Arabia and Egypt, as well as Jerusalem in Palestine and Qayrawān in North Africa.⁴⁹ Al-Kharrāz's life and work as a Sufi author were marked by polemics and persecution. He

47 G. Böwering, *Duʿl-Nūn Meṣrī*, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* vii, 572-573.

48 Böwering, *Mystical Vision* 50-54. Yaḥyā al-Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191) dubbed the wisdom tradition of the ancient sages "the pre-eternal leaven (*al-khamīra al-azaliyya*)" and considered his own philosophy of illumination to stem from the confluence of the two principal strands of this wisdom tradition, the Persian legacy (transmitted through Kaykhusraw and continued in the Sufi milieu by Bāyazīd al-Bastāmī and al-Kharāqānī) and the Greek heritage (transmitted through Hermes and integrated into Sufism by Dhū'l-Nūn and Sahl al-Tustarī).

49 W. Madelung, *Al-Kharrāz*, EI iv, 1083-1084

was accused of unbelief (*kufr*) by the scholars of Baghdad because they judged expressions he employed in his *Kitāb al-sirr* to be heretical. Probably in 264/878 al-Kharrāz was forced to leave his home town and take up residence in Mecca where he lived for eleven years, until his teachings led to his expulsion by the local governor. During the last part of his life al-Kharrāz found refuge in Egypt where he died in 286/899. He conducted a controversial correspondence on Sufi doctrine with Ibn ʿAṭāʾ and al-Nūrī, sustained a lengthy polemic with the Sufi circles of Damascus concerning the nature of the vision of God, and he wrote his *Kitāb al-kashf waʾl-bayān* — perhaps a refutation of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's theory of sainthood (*wilāya*).⁵⁰ His case clearly reveals the friction that existed within Sufi circles over the issue of the precise nature of visionary experiences.

Al-Kharrāz endeavored to synthesize theories of ecstatic mysticism with the traditional teachings of Islamic religious law. He maintained that the esoteric meaning of scripture and law had to be authenticated by their literal sense and he upheld the superiority of prophetic over mystical knowledge. He grounded such Sufi practices as recollection of God (*dhikr*) and listening to Koran recital (*samāʿ*) in the regular and proper performance of five-fold daily prayer. Al-Kharrāz developed the influential mystical theory of *al-fanāʾ waʾl-baqāʾ* (self-obliteration and subsistence in God), which became a watchword of Sufism for the apex of mystical experience, combining mystical knowledge as anamnesis of the primordial covenant (*alastu bi-rabbikum*) with the vision of God (*ruʾya*).⁵¹ Through this theory he refined the Sufi argument favoring the substitution of divine attributes for human qualities in the experience of mystical union — a view condemned as heresy by later generations but one which remained influential in Sufi circles for many centuries.

The common denominator for both the intramural rivalries between Sufi ascetics and mystics and their external conflicts with the scholars of law and religion seems to have been the claim to reciprocal love between God and the mystic, particularly when such a claim was made publicly. Once the notion of mystic insight, whether visionary experience of God or symbolically-mediated encounter with the divine presence, became a public scandal, the Sufis were con-

⁵⁰ al-Kharrāz, *Rasāʾil al-Kharrāz*, ed. Q. Sāmarrāʾī (Baghdad 1387/1967) 31-37

⁵¹ G. Böwering, 'Baqaʾ wa fanāʾ', *Encyclopaedia Iranica* iii, 722-724

fronted with persecution by the populace and prosecution by the government. As long as their teachings were confined within their own circles, the Sufis managed to find ways of peaceful coexistence with both the government and society at large. As soon as they proclaimed their teachings in public, however, they came into serious conflict with the authorities, as the trial and crucifixion of al-Ḥallāj demonstrate most dramatically.

Subsequent to public exposure, Sufi doctrines were attacked by the scholars of law and religion and eventually labelled as heretical. As in other areas of religious disputation, the polemical presentation of Sufi doctrine for purposes of refutation tended to caricature the actual teachings and to reinforce the objections raised by the adversaries of Sufism. This process can be amply documented with regard to the tenets of a group of Sufi theologians known as the Sālīmiyya, who were allied with the Mālikīs and attacked by the Ḥanbalīs. The case of the Sālīmiyya also shows in quite some detail how Sufi Koran interpretation, in this case that attributed to their ninth-century forebear Sahl al-Tustarī, was exploited by opponents of Sufism to formulate accusations of heresy and to draw up heresiographical lists of false doctrines. Tracing that process requires an understanding of both the mystical exegesis of Sahl al-Tustarī and its subsequent enshrinement and development by the Sālīmiyya.

Sahl al-Tustarī (d. in Basra in 283/896)⁵² is remembered in later hagiographical literature for his technicolor vision of God's supreme name, written in the sky from east to west in green light,⁵³ and for his visionary journeys to Noah's ark on Mount Qāf and the city of the ʿĀd, built by the Jinn in Yemen.⁵⁴ When the Zanj occupied Tustar for a short time in 263/877, he was summoned to the camp of the Saffārids to cure their ailing leader, Yaʿqūb b. al-Layth, who had been wounded when defeated by the caliphal regent al-Muwaffaq in 262/876.⁵⁵ Expelled from his home town for political or doctrinal reasons, Sahl al-Tustarī took up residence in Basra early in 263/877, though another strand of evidence in the sources would suggest that he had already settled there as early as 258/871 when the Zanj sacked the town.⁵⁶ In Basra, Sahl al-Tustarī was initially welcomed

⁵² Böwering, *Mystical Vision* 43-99.

⁵³ Cf. Sahl al-Tustarī, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-karīm* (Cairo 1329/1911) 17, 24.

⁵⁴ al-Makki, *Qūt al-qulūb* ii, 138; Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen* ii, 564-565.

⁵⁵ Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ* x, 210.

⁵⁶ al-Makki, *Qūt al-qulūb* ii, 141; Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen* ii, 569.

by Abū Dāʿūd al-Sijistānī (d. 275/889) but, because of his claim to be ‘the proof of God’ (*ḥujjat Allāh*), soon became involved in religious controversy with Abū Yaḥyā Zakariyāʾ al-Sājī (d. 307/909) and Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Zubayrī (d. 317/929), leading Shāfiʿī scholars of the city.⁵⁷

The central focus of Sahl al-Tustarī’s mysticism is the Sufi recollection of God (*dhikr*), a key practice which he put on a firm theoretical basis. According to the extant biographical sources, all his life he observed the method of recollecting God by repeating the mental prayer ‘God is my witness’ (*Allāhu shāhidī*) and understanding this recollection to be his daily nourishment (*qūt*). He interpreted it experientially as the breakthrough to God, who effects His own recollection within the mystic’s heart (*dhikr Allāh bi’llāh; al-dhikr bi’l-madhkūr*). Anchoring the foundations of *dhikr* in the self-revelation of God at the primordial covenant in pre-existence (*alastu bi-rabbikum*, 7/172), Sahl al-Tustarī understood this practice of recollection as anamnesis. The mystic rediscovers that primeval moment of humanity before God in the inmost recesses of his soul (*sirr al-nafs*) when he hears Pharaoh’s blasphemous proclamation of his own lordship, ‘I am your Lord Most High’ (*anā rabbukum al-aʿlā*, 79/24). Listening to God, the true speaker of the Koran, the mystic paradoxically perceives the actual essence of belief flowing from Pharaoh’s tongue of unbelief and remembers in his experience the moment when God, in pre-existence, affirmed His oneness and lordship before all humanity. There is only one who can truly say, ‘I am’ (*anā*). This is God Himself, giving expression to the secret of divine lordship (*sirr al-rubūbiyya*) as captured by the mystic in the experience of recollection.⁵⁸

Sahl al-Tustarī’s mystical theology is deeply embedded in Koranic exegesis, and his interpretation of Koran 7/172, in conjunction with 79/24, as well as his interpretation of 2/30 in conjunction with 53/13-18, and his interpretation of 39/42, all provided focal points of controversy involving his circle of disciples in Basra. Interpreting Koran 2/30 and 53/13-18, Sahl al-Tustarī developed the idea of ‘the light of Muḥammad’ (*nūr Muḥammad*) to designate the primal man and prototypical mystic, conceiving of Muḥammad as the column of light (*ʿamūd al-nūr*) standing in primordial adoration of God, the crystal which draws the divine light upon itself and projects it onto

⁵⁷ al-Shaʿrānī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Cairo 1315/1897) i, 67.

⁵⁸ Böwering, *Sahl al-Tustarī*, El viii, 841.

humanity. In his psychology, Sahl al-Tustarī plays on the *double entendre* of *nafas* (breath; life-breath) and *naḥs* (soul, self) and perceives the human soul as the theater of a struggle between two antagonistic tendencies, the spiritual self (*naḥs al-rūḥ*) and the natural self (*naḥs al-ṭabʿ*). Interpreting Koran 39/42, Sahl al-Tustarī traces the two selves to the notion of *tawaffī* (God's taking the souls unto Himself in death, sleep and mystic ascent) and understands each of them as subtle substances, the one luminous, the other coarse.⁵⁹

There are only fragmentary source texts which illuminate Sahl al-Tustarī's resolution of the central problem of Muslim theology concerning the interrelation between divine omnipotence and human responsibility. From these we can reconstruct his view that God creates both good and evil and possesses two kinds of will, divine volition (*mashīʿa*) and creative will (*irāda*). Since human action is caused by divine agency, God must possess divine foreknowledge (*ʿilm Allāh al-sābiq*) of it prior to its actual occurrence. God's providence, made explicit in His commands and prohibitions, parallels His guidance, as expressed in His help (*maʿūna*, also termed *wilāya*) and protection (*ʿiṣma*). When man performs an action in conformity with the divine commands and prohibitions, he is granted the divine succour of God's *maʿūna*, i.e. divinely conferred success (*tawfīq*). Should he commit an act in opposition to the divine commands and prohibitions, man places himself outside the divine custody and is deserted by God, who withdraws His *ʿiṣma* and forsakes man (*khidhlān*). It is man's duty to turn to God with thanksgiving when he performs a good deed and to seek God's succour through repentance when he commits an evil deed. Whether man conforms to, or opposes, the divine commands and prohibitions, in each case the action itself comes from God, although it is carried out through man.⁶⁰

Shortly after his death in Basra, Sahl al-Tustarī's direct disciples split into two groups. One group chose Baghdad as the center of their activity, either joining the Sufi circle of al-Junayd or associating themselves with the Ḥanbalīs in the city's Muḥawwal quarter. The other group remained in Basra and found acceptance among the local Mālikīs. It formed the nucleus of a previously-mentioned theological school, the Sālimiyya, that was organized by Abū'l-Ḥasan Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Sālim al-Baṣrī (d. 356/967), the son of Sahl al-

⁵⁹ Böwering, *Mystical Vision* 149-153; 244-246.

⁶⁰ Böwering, *Mystical Vision* 175-184.

Tustarī's life-long associate Muḥammad b. Sālīm. The most famous exponent of the Sālīmiyya, however, was Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (d. 386/996) who, in his *Qūt al-qulūb*, frequently cites Abū'l-Ḥasan as 'our *shaykh*' and Sahl al-Tustarī as 'our *imām*'. The Sālīmiyya, which also adopted ideas propagated by Abū Ḥulmān al-Fārisī al-Dimashqī (d. circa 340/951), became the target of a refutation (*al-Radd 'alā Ibn Sālīm*) written by the Shāfi'ī (or Zāhirī) Ibn Khafif (d. 371/981).⁶¹ Possibly on the basis of this refutation, a polemical list of eighteen objectionable propositions was drawn up in Ḥanbalī circles by Ibn al-Farrā' (d. 458/1065) and recorded in his *Mu'tamad*. 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (d. 561/1167) copied and rejected twelve of these propositions in his *Ghunya*.⁶² The *Mu'tamad* presented the teachings of the Sālīmiyya in a manner guaranteed to appear heretical to those Ḥanbalīs who were intent on casting aspersions on proponents of Mālikī Sufism.

Even after a cursory glance at a few of the eighteen propositions, one realizes how much such a polemical presentation is a distortion of Sahl al-Tustarī's original teachings. In the third proposition of the anti-Sālīmiyya polemic, Sahl al-Tustarī's conception of the light of Muḥammad is transformed into the anthropomorphic heresy: 'God will be seen on the Day of Resurrection in the form of a Muḥammad-like human being'. This, in turn, seemed to be reinforced by the sixth proposition: 'The unbelievers will see God in the world to come while He calls them to give account'. In the thirteenth proposition Sahl al-Tustarī's distinction between God's volition and His creative will is misrepresented as introducing finitude into the concept of the Creator: 'The creative will is a branch of the divine volition, and divine volition is the root of the creative will; the divine volition is eternal but the creative will is originated'. Again, this misrepresentation appears to find confirmation in the seventeenth proposition: 'God has a single divine volition, as He has a single knowledge; but He has an (act of) creative will with each expressly willed object'. The fifteenth proposition seems to challenge the concept of prophethood: 'The Prophet knew the Koran by heart prior to the (call to) prophethood and before Gabriel came to him', an assertion apparently supported by the ninth proposition: 'Gabriel comes to the Prophet without leaving his (heavenly) place', and the sixteenth: 'God

⁶¹ This text has not come down to us; see Böwering, *Sahl al-Tustarī*, EI viii, 840.

⁶² Ibn al-Farrā', *al-Mu'tamad fī uṣūl al-dīn* (Beirut 1974) 217-221; 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī, *al-Ghunya li-ṭālibī ṭarīq al-ḥaqq* (Cairo 1322) i, 106-107.

(Himself) recites through the tongue of every Koran reader; when one listens to the Koran recitation of a reader, one hears it from God'.⁶³

In addition to such polemical distortion, charges of heresy against Sufis took the form of direct attacks on Sufi Koranic commentary. A particularly virulent and enduring line of attack emerged from the increasing Sunni-Shii polarity. In this regard, some of the harshest criticism was reserved for Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021) who dared to integrate a considerable body of Shīʿī material into his two Sufi Koran commentaries and thereby aroused the opposition of orthodox scholars. Already during al-Sulamī's lifetime, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Qaṭṭān (d. 422/1031) disparaged him as an unreliable fabricator.⁶⁴ Al-Wāḥidī (d. 468/1076) likened the *Ḥaqāʾiq al-tafsīr* to unbelief (*kufr*)⁶⁵ and Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200) attacked it in his *Talbīs Iblīs*.⁶⁶ Later authors such as Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) in his *Fatāwā* issued highly critical judgements against the work.⁶⁷ Al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348) doubted even whether al-Sulamī ought to be credited with the authorship of the *Ḥaqāʾiq al-tafsīr*, since in al-Dhahabī's opinion the work was a compendium of distortion and heresy (*tahrīf wa-qarmaṭa*).⁶⁸

In fact, al-Sulamī collected hundreds of glosses on the authority of Jaʿfar al-Šādiq (d. 148/765) in his Koran commentaries. The material derives from different sources, though much of it is explicitly quoted on the authority of two *isnāds*. One *isnād* is traced back through Abū Naṣr Maṣṣūr b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Iṣbahānī, Abū'l-Qāsim al-Iskandarānī and Abū Jaʿfar al-Malaṭī to the chain of the Shīʿī imāms ascending from ʿAlī al-Riḍā (d. 203/818) through Mūsā al-Kāẓim (d. 183/799) to Jaʿfar al-Šādiq. The other *isnād* links al-Sulamī to the same Shīʿī line of imāms through Aḥmad b. Naṣr al-Dhāriʿ, ʿAbdallāh b. Aḥmad b. ʿĀmir and his father. Though al-Dāraquṭnī (d. 385/995), Ibn al-Jawzī and al-Dhahabī consider this latter chain totally unreliable, they substantiate a written source (*nuskha*) and well-known volume (*juzʾ mashhūr*) as the basis for much of the same material at-

⁶³ Böwering, *Mystical Vision* 94-95.

⁶⁴ al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz* (Hyderabad 1958) 1046.

⁶⁵ al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾriḥ Baghdad* (Cairo 1931) ii, 248.

⁶⁶ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs Iblīs* (Cairo 1340/1922) 354.

⁶⁷ Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ fatāwā shaykh al-Islām* (Beirut 1328/1910) x, 367, 681; xi, 41-43, 578, 581; xiii, 240, 242-244; xviii, 72; 35, 184.

⁶⁸ al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xvii, 255; *Taʾriḥ al-Islām* (years 401-420) 307.

tributed to Jaʿfar al-Šādiq.⁶⁹

Al-Dhahabī further states that there were three versions of the family tradition transmitted by ʿAlī al-Riḍā and attributed to Jaʿfar al-Šādiq, one of which was ‘a big volume’ (*nuskha kabīra*) in the possession of Aḥmad b. ʿĀmir al-Ṭāʾī. This information is confirmed by al-Najāshī (d. 450/1058) who read the volume (*nuskha*) with his teacher and received an authorization (*ijāza*) to transmit it. The second version was in the hands of ʿAlī b. Mahdī al-Raqqī, a source with which al-Sulamī became familiar at Kufa as transmitted by Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh b. al-Muṭṭalib al-Shaybānī (297-387/910-97). The third version was in the possession of Dāʾūd b. Sulaymān al-Jurjānī who is cited in the local history of Qazwīn as a transmitter of Shīʿī material on the authority of ʿAlī al-Riḍā, who spent time in Qazwīn hiding from his enemies. Though not directly germane to my argument, it is worth noting that the polemical attitude of al-Dhahabī and others toward the Shīʿī tradition induced the polemicists to record the existence of this line of transmission and to establish evidence indicating the appropriation of the Shīʿī tradition by Sunni Sufism in Khurasan in the fourth/tenth century.⁷⁰

The opponents of Sufism, and the Ḥanbalis in particular, recognized the power of Sufi Koran interpretation and combatted it with polemical invective that tended both to misconstrue the actual teachings of the Sufis and to vilify their doctrines. These adversaries perceived the inner strength of the Sufi hermeneutics, an interpretive perspective based on direct access to a deeper level of meaning enshrined in the Koran, generally termed *bāṭin*, the ‘inner sense’ of the Koran. They also detected the strong link that mutually bound Sufis and Shīʿīs in their employment of a *bāṭin* method of Koranic interpretation. Discounting the genealogical limitations through which the Shīʿīs restricted the validity of the *bāṭin* to authentic statements of the imāms, the Sufis anchored themselves in the conviction that God continued to communicate directly with his mystical elect in the time after the Prophet. They discovered the foundations of their election in *tawba*, their total and unconditional turning to God, a movement accepted and rewarded by unequivocal divine self-revelation. They remained anchored to this foundation in the face of conflict, persecution and accusations of heresy, from both within

⁶⁹ G. Böwering, ‘The Major Sources of Sulamī’s Minor Koran Commentary’, *Oriens* xxxv (1996) 35-56.

⁷⁰ Böwering, ‘Major Sources’ 52-56.

their own circles and beyond, by continuing to elicit from the Koran a level of meaning that unearthed treasures of insight. Despite their attempts throughout history to appease the scholars of law and religion by presenting themselves as law-abiding and tradition-respecting Muslims, the Sufis continued to challenge a rigid understanding of the unimpeachable transcendence of God and the finality of Muḥammad's prophethood. This challenge was perennially reinforced both by their inner conversion and their belief in the importance of continually sending deep resonant probes into the inexhaustible text of the Koran.

APPENDIX

A note on *t-w-b* in the Koran

The various derivatives of the stem *t-w-b* are cited 87 times in the Koran (63 times in Medinan, and 21 times in later Meccan verses) and their earliest occurrence falls in the second Meccan period with reference to God's turning to Adam in forgiveness.⁷¹ Besides its general use in absolute construction, the root displays a characteristic usage in the Koran when joined with the prepositions *ilā* and *ʿalā*. Used with *ilā*, it denotes man's turning to God in repentance; used with *ʿalā*, it signifies God's turning to man in forgiveness.⁷² Allah is *tawwāb raḥīm*, most forgiving and merciful.⁷³ Though God is always ready to accept repentance,⁷⁴ from both men and women,⁷⁵ the Koran does not approve of deathbed repentance.⁷⁶ The Koran includes a telling example of God's forgiveness in answer to the repentance of the prophet David⁷⁷ and records Moses's outcry, 'I repent to You', for having requested to look upon God.⁷⁸ Honoring Moses's words of repentance, a Meccan sura of the Koran cites the formula, 'I repent unto You and am of the Muslims', as the expression of a polytheist's conversion to Islam.⁷⁹ Just as Moses was thrown to the ground before the divine manifestation, so the convert accepts Islam in total surrender to God.

⁷¹ Koran 2/37.

⁷² Derivatives of the root frequently appear in surah 9 which bears the title *al-tawba*. For a complete list of references for the stem *t-w-b* and its derivatives in the Koran, see Muḥammad Fuʿād ʿAbd al-Bāqī, *al-Muʿjam al-mufahras fī alfāz al-Qurʾān al-karīm* (Istanbul 1982) 156-158.

⁷³ Koran 110/3 (*tawwāb*); 2/37, 54, 128, 160; 9/104, 118; 49/12; 4/16, 64 (*tawwāb raḥīm*); 24/10 (*tawwāb ḥakīm*); cf. the frequent parallel passage *ghafūr raḥīm*, 2/173 et passim.

⁷⁴ Koran 40/3 (*qābil al-tawb*); cf. 42/25; 9/104.

⁷⁵ Koran 9/112 (*al-tāʾibūn*); 66/5 (*al-tāʾibār*); 2/222 (*al-tawwābīn*).

⁷⁶ Koran 4/18.

⁷⁷ Koran 38/24-25 (*anāba wa-ghafarnā lahu*).

⁷⁸ Koran 7/143 (*tuḥtu ilayka*).

⁷⁹ Koran 46/15 (*tuḥtu ilayka wa-innī min al-muslimīn*).

Reflecting the awareness that repentance is a life-long practice and an abiding attitude of the Muslim, the hapax legomenon of a Medinan surah issues the highly intensive command, 'Believers, turn to God in sincere repentance'.⁸⁰ Sincere repentance for sins committed through ignorance⁸¹ is preceded by asking forgiveness⁸² and followed by works of faith.⁸³ In the Koran repentance is necessary for a variety of transgressions such as idolatry, hypocrisy, doubting revelation, persecuting Muslims, lending money at interest and slandering virtuous women.⁸⁴ Repentance is especially required of the Medinan turncoats (*al-munāfiqūn*) who publicly accept Muḥammad's authority yet secretly undermine it,⁸⁵ and imposed on those who have resisted Muḥammad's cause by the force of arms.⁸⁶ Though the Koran leaves no room for repentance from apostasy,⁸⁷ it opens a loophole for an apostate's recantation.⁸⁸ This mitigation accords with the general tenor of Koranic repentance, encapsulated in the succinct statements, 'Whoever repents after his evildoing and makes amends, God will turn toward him',⁸⁹ and, 'God will turn only toward those who do evil in ignorance and then repent without delay'.⁹⁰ The two-sided prepositional construction of the root, denoting God's act of restoring man to divine mercy and man's act of turning wholeheartedly to God in repentance, signifies a genuine conversion, a mutual turning of Creator and creature to one another. Both the origin and the terminus of repentance is God. The initiative for *tawba* is with God, because 'He turns toward them, that they might repent';⁹¹ it becomes complete only when repentance is accepted by God, thus reintroducing the creature into the full compact and covenant with Him.⁹²

⁸⁰ Koran 66/8 (*tawbatan naṣūhan*).

⁸¹ Koran 6/54; 16/120.

⁸² Koran 11/3, 52, 61, 90. The prophet Ṣāliḥ's admonition of his people, the Thamūd, to ask forgiveness and repent of their idolatry (11/52, *fa'stagfirūhu thumma tūbū ilayhi*) may reflect a pre-Islamic ritual of repentance, requiring intercession and a gesture of remorse before one receives pardon.

⁸³ Koran 25/70-71.

⁸⁴ E.g., Koran 9/3; 4/146; 9/126; 85/10; 2/279; 24/5.

⁸⁵ Koran 4/145-146.

⁸⁶ Koran 5/33-34.

⁸⁷ Koran 5/90 (*lan tuqbala tawbatuhum*).

⁸⁸ Koran 9/74 (*fa-in yatūbū yaku khayran*).

⁸⁹ Koran 5/39 (*fa-man tāba min ba'di ḡulmiḥi wa-aṣlaḥa fa-inna Allāha yatūbu 'alayhi*).

⁹⁰ Koran 4/17 (*innamā al-tawbatu 'alā'llāhi li'l-ladhina ya'malūna al-sū'a bi-jahālatin thumma yatūbūna min qarīb*).

⁹¹ Koran 9:118 (*tāba 'alayhim li-yatūbū*); cf. Muḥyi al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* (Cairo 1329) ii, 144.

⁹² The Koran employs the root *n-d-m* nine times to denote either the act of remorse and regret (*al-nidāma*) or to express a person's attitude of feeling vexed at having done (or hidden) an evil deed. Thus, after killing his brother Cain became one of those who repent (*al-nādimīn*, 5/31). The use of *al-nidāma* and *al-nādimīn*, however, neither includes a person's explicit act of turning to God nor connotes the reciprocity found in the root *t-w-b* which entails the mutual turning of Creator and creature to one another (for references to the stem *n-d-m* in the Koran, see ʿAbd al-Bāqī, *al-Muʿjam al-mufahras* 691). On the other hand, the derivatives of the root *n-w-b*, used 19 times in the Koran (see ʿAbd al-Bāqī, *al-Muʿjam al-mufahras* 722), stress the

Three issues related to the notion of *tawba* that are not treated in the preceding discussion are: (1) the linguistic question of why Arabic usage did not follow the laws of Semitic sound-shift when it adopted *t-w-b* with regard to its Syriac/Aramaic and Hebrew equivalents;⁹³ (2) the historical phenomena of the Shīʿī Arab *tawwābūn*, who sacrificed their lives for the failure of the community to fulfil its obligation to Ḥusayn, the Prophet's grandson, and of the Sunnī Arab *tawwābūn*, mentioned by al-Masʿūdī as a detachment of police who were recruited from a group of former thieves who had repented of their past misbehavior;⁹⁴ and (3) the theological discussion of the Muʿtazila about *tawba*, ranging from its origins in the *Kitāb al-tawba* ascribed to Wāṣil b. ʿAṭāʾ (d. 131/748)⁹⁵ to the disquisitions in the *Mughnī* of Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025)⁹⁶ including the illustrations found in the *Kitāb al-tawba* of Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā (d. 281/894)⁹⁷ and the Ḥanbalī treatise *Kitāb al-tawwābīn* of Ibn Qudāma (d. 620/1223).⁹⁸

creature's turning to God in repentance without, however, implying the reciprocity included in the use of *t-w-b*. Rather, as shown by the example of David, 38/24-25, derivatives of the frequently cited stem *gh-f-r* in the Koran (see ʿAbd al-Bāqī, *al-Muʿjam al-mufahras* 499-503), denoting God's forgiveness, express the Creator's turning to the creature, thereby establishing the divine response to the human act of repentance.

⁹³ Hebrew *teshūbāh*; Aramaic *tethūbāh*.

⁹⁴ Though the term *tawwābūn* has a Koranic origin (2/222), it is used with particular connotations in the historical sources; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul waʾl-mulūk* (Cairo 1387/1967) v, 551-563; Ibn Kathīr, *Al-bidāya waʾl-nihāya* viii, 250-253; 254-259; al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, ed. B. de Meynard (Paris 1877) v, 217-223.

⁹⁵ For the *Kitāb al-tawba* ascribed to Wāṣil b. ʿAṭāʾ, see GAS i, 596; van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft* v, 137.

⁹⁶ ʿAbd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Asadābādī, *al-Mughnī fī awāb al-tawḥīd waʾl-ʿadl* (Cairo 1960-65) xiv (1385/1965) 311-461.

⁹⁷ For the *Kitāb al-tawba* of Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā, ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad al-Qurashī, see A.J. Arberry, 'Ibn Abī'l-Dunyā on Penitence', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1951) 48-63; cf. GAL i, 153-154; S i, 247-248; Reinhard Weipert und Stefan Weninger, 'Die erhaltenen Werke des Ibn Abī d-Dunyā', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* cxlvi (1996) 449.

⁹⁸ Ibn Qudāma, *Kitāb al-tawwābīn*, ed. G. Makdisi (Damascus 1961).

THE MU^ʿTAZILA AND SUFISM

FLORIAN SOBIEROJ

Contrary to all appearances, Sufism and the Mu^ʿtazila share common roots. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), considered one of the founding fathers of Sufism,¹ is known to have been the teacher of Wāṣil b. ʿAtāʾ, who is associated with the origins of the Mu^ʿtazila. Although the Mu^ʿtazila were not the major recipients of Ḥasan's religious legacy — ascetico-mystical ideas (*ikhlāṣ*, *ishq*) flourished in particular in the circle of Ḥasan's student ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd and the Bakriyya² — nevertheless there were some Mu^ʿtazila who wore the woolen Sufi frock and manifested ascetic traits.

When, in the wake of the fall of the Barmakids (187/803), the *ahl al-ḥadīth* gained influence over Hārūn al-Rashīd, the Mu^ʿtazilī poet Abū ʿAmr Kulthūm al-ʿAtṭābī (d. probably 208/823) who sought the favour of the caliph began to 'wear wool (*yalbis al-ṣūf*) and displayed asceticism'.³ As Sufi tendencies increased yet further, an Iranian preacher of Mu^ʿtazilī persuasion, Abū'l-Sarī Maṣṣūr b. ʿAmmār al-Sulamī, enjoyed an even greater popularity than Kulthūm.⁴ Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī has included him in his collection of Sufi lives.⁵

In addition to these developments, the occurrence of the civil war between al-Amīn and his brother al-Ma'mūn brought about a certain

¹ Cf. Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb*: 'Al-Ḥasan was the first who revealed the path of this science' (cf. Richard Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen*. Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī's *Qūt al-qulūb*, eingeleitet, übersetzt und kommentiert, i-iv (Stuttgart 1992) i, 14. See also ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Cairo n.d.) i, 25.

² The Bakriyya were followers of Bakr b. Ukht ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd, the nephew of ʿAbd al-Wāḥid; see Josef van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jh. Hidschra. Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*, i-vi (Berlin-New York 1991-7) ii, 108-118. The Mu^ʿtazilī leader Bishr b. al-Muʿtamir disputed with Bakr (van Ess, op. cit. ii, 109).

³ Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh Baghdād*, 1-14 (Cairo 1349/1931) xii, 488; van Ess, op. cit. ii, 100 f.)

⁴ Ibid. iii, 102 ff.

⁵ Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiyya*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn Shurayba (Cairo 1372/1953) 130-6, no. 17.

modification of Mu^ctazilī theology in the direction of Sufism.⁶ The protagonist in this process was the founder of the Baghdādī school of the Mu^ctazila, Abū Sahl Bishr b. al-Mu^ctamir (d. 210/825). Among his students Ibn al-Mu^ctamir attracted certain people who are designated in a Mu^ctazilī text⁷ as *ṣūfiyyat al-mu^ctazila*. One of these Mu^ctazilī Sufis was Abū ‘Imrān al-Raqāshī, Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Balkhī⁸ who declared paid labour forbidden and considered the Islamic community to be a ‘house of disbelief’. The prohibition of paid labour, *taḥrīm al-makāsib*, was known in Sufism as a manifestation of extreme trust in God as preached by the Khurasanian ascetic Shaqīq al-Balkhī (d. 194/809-10). Certain of these Sufis also eschewed the pursuit of *kasb* on the grounds of religious scrupulosity (*wara^c*), since they considered everything in the *dār al-islām* to be corrupt and illegitimate. Thus, they viewed the gains of their mendicant activity as equal to carrion which is permissible for the Muslim in an emergency situation.⁹ Some of the *ṣūfiyyat al-mu^ctazila* held anthropomorphic beliefs. An example is Abū Shu^cayb al-Nāsik, who is referred to as ‘one of the old Mu^ctazila’ by al-Jāḥiẓ and as a *ṣūfī* by al-Ash‘arī.¹⁰ He believed that God shows emotion; that He becomes glad or angry depending on the behaviour of man. The image of God thus constructed was far removed from that of the ‘orthodox’ Mu^ctazila.

The *ṣūfiyyat al-mu^ctazila* denied the legitimacy of political authority by arguing that as long as men knew the laws and kept them, a ruler was superfluous.¹¹ Besides Abū ‘Imrān, Pseudo-Nāshī¹² also mentions Faḍl al-Ḥadathī, a student of al-Nazzām,¹² as a member of this group.

Ibn Khābiṭ, a Mu^ctazilī of Baghdad (d. between 227/842 and 232/847), who is often mentioned along with Faḍl al-Ḥadathī, generally subscribed to the theological views of their teacher al-

⁶ Van Ess, op. cit. iii, 106 f.

⁷ The author (Pseudo-Nāshī²) of this text, who wrote shortly before 236/850-1, is possibly identical with Ja‘far b. Ḥarb. For the Arabic text on the *ṣūfiyyat al-mu^ctazila* see Josef van Ess, *Frühe mu^ctazilitische Häresiographie. Zwei Werke des Nāshī² al-Akbar* (Wiesbaden 1971), Arabic part.

⁸ Al-Ḥākim al-Jushamī, *Faḍl al-i‘tizāl wa-ṭabaqāt al-mu^ctazila*, in Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Balkhī, Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār, al-Ḥākim al-Jushamī, ed. Fu‘ād al-Sayyid (Tunis 1974) 284, 4; van Ess, op. cit. iii, 131.

⁹ Ibid. iii, 133.

¹⁰ Ibid. iii, 143.

¹¹ Pseudo-Nāshī², translated in van Ess, op. cit. v, 329 f., text xviii, 1.

¹² Van Ess, op. cit. iii, 132, 436.

Nazzām. However, Ibn Khābiṭ and Faḍl believed in the transmigration of souls.¹³ Faḍl, advocating an even more extreme form of *tanāsukh* than Ibn Khābiṭ, believed that the souls of the damned could be reincarnated not only in animals but even in plants and stones.¹⁴ Faḍl and Ibn Khābiṭ, who of course were excommunicated by the Muʿtazila, also shared the belief that Jesus was ‘logos’, having been created as the first being and standing between the world and God. They viewed Jesus as their exemplary model rather than Muḥammad whom they allegedly criticized for his numerous marriages.¹⁵ According to them, Jesus directs the world, as a temporal, anthropomorphic deity, a demiurge or a second God of the creation.¹⁶

However, as the Muʿtazila and the *ahl al-sunna waʾl-jamāʿa* developed into separate denominations, with the Sufis by and large being members of the Sunni community, their common heritage was soon lost sight of. Traces of a corps of Sufis within the Muʿtazila cease to be discernible. The Sufis criticized the Muʿtazila for their disagreement with Sunni doctrine. As a result, the Sufis experienced the repercussions of their criticism just as any other Sunni Muslim might, but at the same time they were also criticized for some of the distinctive views they held as Sufis.

One of the centers of Muʿtazilī power at the time when Sufism first made its appearance as a distinct religious movement was Baghdad. While the Muʿtazilī theologians had allied themselves with the ʿAbbāsid caliphs since al-Maʾmūn, the Sufi community of Baghdad was grouped around men like Bishr b. al-Ḥārith al-Ḥāfi, a former *ḥadīth*-scholar.¹⁷ Bishr, of Khurasanian origin, lived well into the

13 *Tanāsukh*; van Ess, op. cit. iii, 435.

14 Ibid. iii, 436.

15 Ibid. iii, 437.

16 Ibid. iii, 438.

17 Bishr was born near Marw in 150/767 or 152/769 and he died 226/840 or 227/841-2 in Baghdad. He was regarded as an accomplished mystic by contemporary Sufis such as Yahyā al-Jallāʾ and by later ones like Ibn Khafīf [Rukn al-Dīn Yahyā b. Junayd-i Shīrāzī, *Sīrat al-shaykh al-kabīr Abū ʿAbd Allāh Ibn al-Khafīf al-Shīrāzī*, ed. A. Schimmel (Ankara 1955) 121 f., 127]. Yahyā al-Shīrāzī compared Bishr with Dhūʾl-Nūn and Sahl al-Tustarī [Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, *Al-lumaʿ fī l-taṣawwuf*, ed. R.A. Nicholson (London-Leiden 1914)] 184, 22. For Bishr see al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh* vii, 67-80; Abūʾl-Faraj ʿAbd al-Rahmān Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*, ed. Muḥammad Amīn al-Khanjī (Cairo 1349/1930) 116-120; Shams al-Dīn Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhababī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, ed. Shuʿayb Arnaʾūt et al. i-xxiii (Beirut 1401-5/1981-5) x, 469-77; EI, s. v.

period of the Mu^ʿtazilī Inquisition, which lasted from about 218/833 to 237/851, i.e. for almost twenty years. Al-Maʿmūn and his two immediate successors used the inquisition, known as the *miḥna*, to impose the view that the Koran was a ‘created’ work. Bishr’s seeming aloofness when Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal was brought before the Inquisition exemplifies the lack of Sufi opposition to the Mu^ʿtazila in the early third/ninth century.¹⁸

Before the *miḥna* many had regarded Bishr, by virtue of his piety (*waraʿ*) and asceticism (*zuhd*), as superior to Ibn Ḥanbal. However, during the ordeal of the Mu^ʿtazilī Inquisition Ibn Ḥanbal emerged as the upholder of the Sunni faith and came to be seen as far excelling Bishr. Even Jāmī, the well-known later Sufi author, admits this: ‘He (Bishr) was regarded as greater than Aḥmad-i Ḥanbal until, when the *fiṭna* of declaring the Koran created occurred, he stayed at home and Aḥmad stepped forward’.¹⁹

Both Sufi²⁰ and non-Sufi authors relate how Bishr was scolded for his passivity when he was challenged to go out and assist Ibn Ḥanbal (*qum bi-nā nanṣur hādihāʾl-rajul*).²¹ Bishr contented himself with praising Aḥmad for his allegedly unflinching stance on the Koranic issue: His nephew ʿAlī b. Khashram, later one of the teachers of al-Junayd, ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Badrān al-Dūmī al-Dimashqī²² asked him: ‘Abū Naṣr, why did you not go out to speak on behalf of religion and the *ahl al-sunna*?’ Bishr is said to have replied: ‘Do you expect from me the rank of the prophets? My body does not possess the strength for this. God protected Aḥmad from the front and from the back...’²³ Or according to another tradition: ‘Ibn Ḥanbal was placed inside the furnace and he emerged from it as red gold’.²⁴ In private Bishr

¹⁸ In a work by Ibn Khafif of Shiraz, a Sufi who lived in the fourth/tenth century (d. 371/982), Bishr is depicted as not responding to the efforts of the non-Mu^ʿtazilī caliph al-Mu^ʿtaḍid (ruled 892-902) to gain his favours — a story which cannot be true for chronological reasons; cf. Muḥammad b. Khafif, *Kitāb al-iqtiṣād* in F. Sobieroj, *Ibn Khafif aṣ-Ṣirāzī und seine Schrift zur Novizenerziehung (Kitāb al-Iqtiṣād). Biographische Studien, Edition und Übersetzung* (forthcoming) faṣl 47.

¹⁹ ʿAbd al-Raḥmān-i Jāmī, *Nafahāt al-uns min ḥaḍarāt al-quḍs*, ed. Tawḥīdipūr (Teheran 1336) 48.

²⁰ ʿAbd Allāh-i Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt ul-ṣūfiyya*, ed. Muḥammad-i Sarwar-i Mawlāʾī (Teheran 1362) 85.

²¹ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 119.

²² Cf. al-Sulamī in ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Badrān al-Dūmī al-Dimashqī, *Tahdhīb Taʾriḫ b. ʿAsākir*, vii vols. (Damaskus 1329-51) iii, 229.

²³ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 118.

²⁴ al-Dhahabī, *Siyyar* xi, 197. Al-Dhahabī has the following variant: ‘When Aḥmad was

expressed his full agreement with Aḥmad's stance on the Koranic issue. ʿAbd Allāh, a son of Ibn Ḥanbal, relates that when his father was beaten, Bishr was told by his students: 'If only you had gone forth', and he said: 'I support what Aḥmad says' (*innī ʿalā qawl Aḥmad*).²⁵

Another way Bishr expressed his support for Ibn Ḥanbal's standpoint was by reproaching companions of the latter — and of his own — who had given up their resistance to acknowledging the Muʿtazili dogma of *khalq al-qurʾān*. Of the religious dignitaries who surrendered under duress it was Abū Naṣr al-Tammār²⁶ and three other eminent *ḥadīth*-scholars whose defection, we are told, had distressed Ibn Ḥanbal the most. Ibn Ḥanbal declared that henceforth, *ḥadīth* should not be copied from al-Tammār, a transmitter from Mālik. A nephew of Bishr, Abū Ḥafṣ, reports that his uncle asked him about 'news of Abū Naṣr' (al-Tammār), on the day when the latter was summoned to the palace of Iṣḥāq b. Ibrāhīm, the *amīr* of Baghdad. Abū Ḥafṣ is quoted as replying that al-Tammār 'answered' (i.e. that he acknowledged the dogma) and that Bishr had him repeat this a number of times, until Bishr exclaimed: 'How beautiful this beard would be if it were coloured — i.e. with blood — and if he had not answered until he was killed'.²⁷ Tradition also has it that Bishr expressed regret for having allegedly been incapable of assisting Aḥmad in his 'ordeal'²⁸ and that he envied Ibn Ḥanbal for the staunchness he is reported to have shown in his defense of the Sunni

taken out to be flogged, they went to Bishr b. al-Ḥārith saying: "It is incumbent upon you that you speak." He said: "Is it that you want me to adopt the stand of the prophets? I am not up to it." (*laysa dhā ʿindī*); *ibid.* xi, 254.

²⁵ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 118. That Bishr defended Ibn Ḥanbal for the latter's view on the nature of the Koran is also implied in a report included in al-Dhahabī's biography of Bishr (*Siyar* x, 473 f.): "A student of Bishr said to ʿAbd al-Rahmān b. Abī Ḥātim: 'Someone reported to Bishr while I was present: "It was said to that man — and he meant Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal: 'Is God not eternal and everything beside him is created?' And Bishr did not leave this man alone, discoursing (*yatakallam*) until he said: 'No, everything is created except the Koran'".

²⁶ Abū Naṣr al-Tammār as well is known to have associated with Bishr. He reports (Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 117) that Bishr came to him during the days of the *miḥna* when Aḥmad was flogged and said: 'Abū Naṣr, this man today performs a work of which men at large are incapable' (*ʿajaza ʿanhu ʿl-khalq*).

²⁷ Cf. *ibid.* 386, and the following variant: 'Would that their heads were tinged with their blood and that they had not answered' (al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xi, 323).

²⁸ Abū ʿl-Ḥaytham, the 'worshipper' (*al-ʿābid*), reports that a man came to Bishr informing him that by that moment Aḥmad had already been flogged seventeen times. Bishr extended his leg and looking down at his feet, exclaimed: 'How ugly is this foot since it does not bear a chain for having supported this man' (Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 119).

doctrine on the Koran.²⁹

Whereas on the whole the Sufis apparently did not show any noteworthy opposition to the Mu[°]tazilī-backed regime in Baghdad, or, for that matter, any active solidarity with Ibn Ḥanbal who was perceived as the standard-bearer of Sunni doctrine, they soon began, possibly by way of compensation, to honour and glorify Ibn Ḥanbal. Thus, on the authority of Bishr, the Sufi author Abū'l-Ḥasan °Alī b. Jahḍam (d. 414/1023) transmits a lengthy description by Sufyān al-Thawrī of the virtues of the *fatā*, i.e. the chivalrous young man. Bishr concludes the quotation of Sufyān by designating Ibn Ḥanbal as a man in whom all the characteristics of chivalry (*futuwwa*) were united.³⁰ Yaḥyā al-Jallā°, who was a disciple of Bishr and a leading Syrian Sufi shaykh,³¹ acknowledged the spiritual superiority of Ibn Ḥanbal over his Sufi companions, Yaḥyā al-Jallā° °Abd al-Wahhāb al-Warrāq³² as emerges from a report with an *isnād* of Abū Nu°aym, recorded by Ibn al-Jawzī.

By means of this hagiographical activity, Ibn Ḥanbal is finally elevated to the rank of one of the guardian saints of Baghdad. Al-Sulamī mentions Ibn Ḥanbal among the four *awliyā°* whose tombs in Baghdad were believed to guard its population against affliction (*hum hiṣn lahum °an kull balāyā*). The other saints are Ma°rūf al-Karkhī, Bishr al-Ḥāfi, and Maṣṣūr b. °Ammār.³³

The Sufis also transmitted statements of Ibn Ḥanbal reflecting an awareness of the crucial importance of his stance on the Koranic issue,³⁴ as well as sayings ascribed to him concerning renunciation

²⁹ Cf. *ibid.* 119 f.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 120.

³¹ al-Sarrāj (*al-Luma°* 184, 22) mistakenly claims that Yaḥyā's son Abū °Abd Allāh (d. 306/918) was the disciple of Bishr (the chronological error is pointed out by al-Sulamī in Ibn Badrān, *Tahdhīb* iii, 233).

³² A certain Abū Ḥafṣ of Tarsus relates (Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 196 f.) that he and Yaḥyā al-Jallā° 'who was said to be one of the *abdāl*' went to Ibn Ḥanbal and asked him what it is that softens the heart (*bi-mā talīn al-qulūb*). Ibn Ḥanbal replied: 'My son, it is through eating ritually pure food'. The visitors then put the same question to Bishr and a certain °Abd al-Wahhāb al-Warrāq. They both intended to quote Koran 13/28 ('Do not the hearts come to rest through the remembrance of God?') but upon hearing Ibn Ḥanbal's answer, they admitted that his reply was the best: 'He has expressed the essential' (*jā°a bi'l-aṣl/jā°aka bi'l-jawhar*). The answers Bishr and °Abd al-Wahhāb gave stressing activities of the heart rather than matters of ritual, distinguish these men as members of a religious group separate from Ibn Ḥanbal.

³³ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 145.

³⁴ Aḥmad b. Abī'l-Ḥawārī, a Syrian Sufi, relates a tradition concerning Ibn Ḥanbal's *miḥna*: 'Since I became embroiled in this matter, I have not heard a more powerful word than

(*zuḥd*). In addition, Sufi stories about Ibn Ḥanbal's heavenly rewards, narrated in the form of dreams, are numerous. One example is a story related by Ibn Khafif, in which Ibn Ḥanbal appears to one of his followers in a dream. Ibn Ḥanbal struts with the gait of 'the servants of Paradise' and he is quoted as saying that God adorned him with a crown and dressed him with golden shoes for having declared: 'The Koran is My [God's] speech'.³⁵

Another story describes how ʿAlī b. al-Muwaffaq (d. 265/878-9), a Sufi from Baghdad, had a vision of Paradise. Here he sees Ibn Ḥanbal being honoured along with two other Sufis of Baghdad, Bishr and Maʿrūf al-Karkhī. Ibn Ḥanbal stands at the gate of Paradise and is ordered to look at the faces of the people of the Sunna and to decide whom to admit. Bishr, for his part, is seated at a tablecloth, served by two angels with food and drink, as a reward for having departed from this world hungry and thirsty. Maʿrūf is situated at the center of the Garden. His eyes are fixed on the Throne and he gazes at the Lord, this being his reward for having served God while longing to behold Him.³⁶

A nephew of Maʿrūf al-Karkhī tells how one time when he was asleep during the period of the *miḥna*, Moses and Jesus appeared before him. They joined Ibn Ḥanbal, the bearers of God's Throne and all the (other) angels, in declaring that the Koran was 'the uncreated word of God'.³⁷ In their dreams the Sufis also saw Ibn

that of a bedouin who spoke to me at Raḥbat Tawq (on the Euphrates). He said: 'Aḥmad, if God kills you, you die a martyr, and if you live, you live in praise' (al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xi, 241). Fath b. Shakhraf, a student of another Syrian Sufi, ʿAbd Allāh b. Khubayq al-Antākī, relates a similar story about Ibn Ḥanbal: 'When Ibn Ḥanbal was in prison, awaiting his public punishment, one night a man appeared to him asking him to persevere because he would be rewarded with Paradise.' [Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ wa-ṭabaqāt al-aṣfiyāʾ*, x vols. (Beirut 1967/1387) ix, 193].

³⁵ Cf. *Sirat-i Ibn Khafif* 169, 3-170,15; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 439.

³⁶ al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xi, 349; also Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 443. In a similar story which was quite popular among 3rd/4th-century Sufis (Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilya* ix, 190), Ibn Ḥanbal is associated with Bishr as well as with Sufyān al-Thawrī. The transmitter, Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Khuzayma, says that Ibn Ḥanbal told him in a posthumous dream that he was rewarded by God in Paradise for maintaining that the Koran is God's uncreated word. According to this story, in Paradise Ibn Ḥanbal also meets Sufyān, whose prayer he used to recite during his lifetime. Sufyān has grown two green wings by means of which he flies from date-palm to date-palm. After giving information about the fortunes of another inhabitant of Paradise, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Warrāq, Ibn Ḥanbal explains how God treated Bishr: 'God said to me: "Well done, you and those who are like Bishr." I left Bishr before the Almighty and in front of him there was a tablecloth [covered with] food, and turning to him, the Almighty said: "Eat, you who did not eat, and drink, you who did not drink, and live in ease, you who did not live in ease."'

³⁷ Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilya* ix, 193.

Ḥanbal seated together with his opponent Ibn Abī Dū^ʿād (d. 240/854), the Mu^ʿtazilī leader and closest confidant of al-Ma^ʿmūn. The two men were in the presence of Muḥammad who was praising the one and condemning the other. The Sufi Ibn Abī'l-Ward is reported to have heard Yaḥyā al-Jallā^ʿ say:³⁸ 'I saw the Prophet in a dream standing at Ṣiniyyat al-Karkh, with Ibn Abī Dū^ʿād sitting on his left site and Aḥmad b. Muḥammad sitting on his right. The Prophet turned to Ibn Abī Dū^ʿād and said: 'If they disbelieve it, we shall appoint a people who do not disbelieve it, and he pointed at Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal'.³⁹

The hagiographical assimilation of Ibn Ḥanbal's image by a certain traditionalist brand of Sufism was facilitated through correspondences between Sufi teachings and Ibn Ḥanbal's attitudes towards poverty, *tawakkul* and *zuhd*. Likewise, the high respect in which he seems to have held certain Sufis of his time may have encouraged the process. He is said to have turned to Abū Ḥamza al-Baghdādī (d. 289/902), a companion of Sarī al-Saqatī and Abū Turāb al-Nakhshabī, and asked him to answer questions in his gathering (*ajīb yā ṣūfī*).⁴⁰ Ibn Ḥanbal considered Bishr al-Ḥāfī as one of the saints (*abdāl*) of his time 'who was only comparable to ʿĀmir b. Qays, the lover of Laylā, as they both were perfect in their renunciation of the world'.⁴¹ Similarly, it is reported that Ibn Ḥanbal's eyes were 'bathed in tears' when mention was made of the nakedness and the perseverance in poverty (*ʿuryuhū wa-ṣabruhū*) of the pious ascetics al-Fuḍayl b. ʿIyāḍ and Faṭḥ al-Mawṣilī.⁴²

However, Ibn Ḥanbal's sympathy with Sufism had its distinct limits, as is clear from the advice he gave his followers not to associate with al-Muḥāsibī. Nevertheless, Ibn Ḥanbal was once moved to tears when he heard this Sufi theorist deliver a sermon on mysticism.⁴³

The only Sufi who physically suffered for his refusal to acknowledge the dogma of *khalq al-qurʿān* seems to have been the famous Eryp-

³⁸ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 445.

³⁹ As a variant of the story (Ibn al-Jawzī, op. cit. 444) explains, this remark refers to Koran 6/89: 'These are the ones to whom we have given the book, the judgement and the prophethood'.

⁴⁰ Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt* 148.

⁴¹ Ibn Badrān, *Tahdhīb* ii, 233.

⁴² Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 273.

⁴³ Ibid. 186.

tian mystic Dhū'l-Nūn who died in 245/860. Both al-Anṣārī⁴⁴ and Jāmī⁴⁵ transmit a report by the Syrian Sufi shaykh Ibrāhīm b. Dāwūd al-Qaṣṣār al-Raqqī. Abū 'Abd Allāh b. al-Jallā⁴⁶ In the report al-Raqqī relates:

'At the time when "the Koran was declared to be created" and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal was in prison, people reported that Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī (as well) was being taken to the caliph's prison to force him declare that the Koran is created. I had heard of Dhū'l-Nūn's reputation, and the people were going to look at him. At the time I was a child. I also went to look at him, at the bridge of Manbij. When I beheld him he appeared wretched in my eyes, for indeed he was wretched in terms of his outer appearance. I said to myself: "Can this be Dhū'l-Nūn who has so great a name and reputation?" Dhū'l-Nūn immediately turned his face to me in the midst of the large crowd and said: "Boy, when God turns away from a servant, the servant's tongue becomes long in criticizing the Friends of God." I fell into a swoon and they poured water over me to bring me back to consciousness. When I stood up, I was a Sufi'.⁴⁷ Al-Dhahabī also adduces a report about Ibn Ḥanbal and Dhū'l-Nūn being in prison together, and indicates that the reason for the imprisonment of the mystic was his declared conviction that 'the Koran is the uncreated word of God'.⁴⁸

In one story in his *Ṭabaqāt* Anṣārī al-Harawī seems to imply that Dhū'l-Nūn was more consistent and radical in his opposition to Mu'tazilī rule. It is insinuated that whereas Ibn Ḥanbal in principle considered himself obliged to obey the commands of the 'sultan', Dhū'l-Nūn felt free of such constraints.⁴⁹ As a matter of fact, in one

⁴⁴ Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt* 19; 409.

⁴⁵ Jāmī, *Nafahāt* 166.

⁴⁶ al-Raqqī was a student of al-Junayd and Abū 'Abd Allāh b. al-Jallā, the son of a disciple of Bishr. Given that al-Raqqī died at a very advanced age in 326/937, his claim that as a small child he had seen Dhū'l-Nūn cannot be ruled out on chronological grounds. On al-Raqqī see Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī, *al-Risāla fī'l-taṣawwuf* (Cairo 1359/1940) 27.

⁴⁷ Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt* 409. This coercion to which Dhū'l-Nūn was subjected to make him acknowledge the Mu'tazilī dogma should be distinguished from the persecution he suffered towards the end of his life (possibly as late as 244/858). Probably because of his mystical teachings (al-Sulamī calls him the first person to speak about the mystical states and stations in Egypt), he provoked the wrath of the authorities and, having been dubbed a *zindīq*, he was evicted by the Egyptian 'ulamā' (al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* xi, 534). He was brought before al-Mutawakkil in 244 A.H., under orders to be killed but won over the caliph by means of his effective preaching (ibid. 535).

⁴⁸ Ibid. xi, 535.

⁴⁹ 'Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī was in prison with Aḥmad b. Hanbal at the time of the *miḥna* to do with declaring the Koran created. One day when evening arrived, extending his hand and removing his chains and fetters, he went up to Aḥmad and said: "Will you come along?" He replied: "No, because I am in the prison of the sultan". This (he answered) because Aḥmad was in prison because he was a Koran-reciter. Dhū'l-Nūn then left Baghdad and performed the

of his credos,⁵⁰ Ibn Ḥanbal defines the faith as including the requirement 'to persevere under the banner of the sultan whatever justice or injustice he may perpetrate' (*wa'l-ṣabr taḥta liwā' al-sultān 'alā mā kān minhū min 'adl aw jawr*).

Another setting for conflict between the Mu^ʿtazila and Sufism was fourth/tenth-century Shiraz.⁵¹ The Mu^ʿtazilī man of letters al-Muḥassin al-Tanūkhī mentions that the Sufis in this city were numbered in the thousands and that their chief was 'Ibn Khafīf al-Baghdādī'.⁵² Ibn Khafīf had already come into contact with the Mu^ʿtazila around 300/900 when, as a very young man, he was present at a debate between Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Ash^ʿarī and the Mu^ʿtazila of Basra. On this occasion al-Ash^ʿarī displayed his mastery of theology and his rhetorical skill, and is meant to have outwitted the Mu^ʿtazila. Ibn Khafīf claimed to have become al-Ash^ʿarī's student (*kuntu aṣḥabuhū*) thereafter.⁵³ His life-long adherence to the theological doctrine of al-Ash^ʿarī is attested by al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013).⁵⁴

Thus, Ibn Khafīf had a negative attitude towards the Mu^ʿtazila which is evident in the biography, *Sīrat-i Ibn Khafīf*, which his disciple ʿAlī al-Daylamī composed about him. His derision is directed at a Mu^ʿtazilī theologian who, for some time, gave instruction to the Ṣaffārid ruler ʿAmr b. al-Layth.⁵⁵ In Ibn Khafīf's biography the theologian in question teaches that it is Iblīs who wills evil⁵⁶ and thus appears to subscribe to the Mu^ʿtazilī tenet of a relative freedom of the human will and the corollary belief in the justice of God (*aṣl al-ʿadl*) who does not will evil. ʿAmr is then portrayed as having refuted the doctrines of his erstwhile teacher by dint of his intelligence. He remains loyal to the teachings of Sunni orthodoxy and in the end

morning prayer (*namāz-i bāmdād*) in Egypt. He turned his face round and said: "Pray for Aḥmad!" (Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt* 19).

⁵⁰ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib* 176.

⁵¹ For an overall picture of the Mu^ʿtazila under the Būyids see Heribert Busse, *Chalif und Großkönig. Die Būyiden im Iraq (945-1055)* (Beirut 1969) 437-447.

⁵² Abū ʿAlī al-Muḥassin b. ʿAlī al-Tanūkhī al-Qādī, *Nishwār al-muḥāḍara*, viii vols., ed. ʿAbbūd al-Shālījī (n. p. 1972/1392) iii, 228.

⁵³ Abū'l-Qāsim ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan b. Hibat Allāh Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tabayn kadhib al-muftarī fī-mā nusiba ilā'l-imām Abī'l-Ḥasan al-Ash^ʿarī* (Beirut 1399/1979) 94-97.

⁵⁴ Abū'l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Tilimsānī al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-riyād fī akhbār 'Iyād*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā et al. (Cairo 1358/1939) iii, 80.

⁵⁵ Cf. *Sīrat-i Ibn Khafīf* 186-9, faṣl 21.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 188.

orders the theologian to be flogged and driven out of town.⁵⁷

When the Shii sultan of the dynasty of the Āl Būya °Aḍud al-Dawla (d. 372/982) assumed rule over Shiraz in 338/949-50, the situation of the Sufis in Fārs took a turn for the worse, since the Būyid *amīr* was under the influence of prominent Mu°tazilī theologians who sympathized with the Shia.⁵⁸ A judge of Baghdad, Abū Muḥammad °Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Fazārī, was dispatched to Shiraz and is said to have founded a convent (*khānaqāh*) in the city for the followers of Ibn Khafif.⁵⁹ Although al-Fazārī was treated badly by °Aḍud al-Dawla, in the end he was confirmed in his office and actually outlived the ruler.⁶⁰

Towards the end of Ibn Khafif's life a tyrant arose in Shiraz whose injustices are referred to by al-Daylamī⁶¹ as the *miḥna* of Danaqsh.⁶² This designation may have been chosen by al-Daylamī or his informant, Ibn Khafif, as a deliberate allusion to the Mu°tazilī *miḥna* under which the Sunni community suffered one and a half centuries earlier. The *ẓālim* Danaqsh might be identical to the Baghdādī Abū Ṭālib °Abd al-°Azīz al-Danaqshī who belonged to the same generation as Ibn Khafif and who was appointed qadi of the town of Rāmhurmuz, a locality between Arrajān and Ahwāz.⁶³ The population of Rāmhurmuz is reported to have adhered to the Mu°tazilī doctrine.⁶⁴ Al-Danaqshī was an associate of the son of al-Muḥassin

⁵⁷ °Amr ruled over Iṣfahān in 265/878-9 where there was a strong Mu°tazilī community. Perhaps this was the town in question. In al-Daylamī's *Sīra*, the story is preceded by eight sections dealing with personalities who came from Iṣfahān (faṣl 13-19).

⁵⁸ Al-Taṇūkhī, *Nishwār* vii, 210 f., informs us about the close relationship between °Aḍud al-Dawla and Abū °Abd Allāh Ḥusayn b. °Alī al-Baṣrī (d. 369/979), a leading Mu°tazilī theologian and ascetic. The latter, a student of Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī and a teacher of Qāḍī °Abd al-Jabbār, combined his Mu°tazilī discourse with strong °Alid leanings [Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Ṭabaqāt al-mu°tazila*, ed. S. Diwald-Wilzer (Wiesbaden 1961)] 105; Abū Rāshid Sa'īd b. Muḥammad al-Naysābūrī, *Masā'il fi'l-khilāf bayn al-baṣriyyīn wa'l-baghdādiyyīn*, ed. Ma'n Ziyāda and Riḍwān al-Sayyid (Beirut 1979) 162.

⁵⁹ Zarkūb-i Shīrāzī, *Shīrāznāma*, ed. Ismā'īl-i Wā'iz-i Jawādī (Teheran n.d.) 35.

⁶⁰ Ibn al-Balkhī, *Fārsnāma*, ed. G. Le Strange and R.A. Nicholson (London 1921) introd. xix, 117 f.

⁶¹ *Sīrat-i Ibn Khafif* 206, faṣl 14, 12.

⁶² I propose to read *ḥūn miḥnat-i Danaqsh ba-Shīrāz uftād* for *ḥūn muḥibb-i Danaqsh ba-Shīrāz uftād* as in Schimmel's edition of the Persian text. She was uncertain of the reading as is indicated by the question mark in the text after *Danaqsh*.

⁶³ Abū Sa'd °Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad al-Sam'ānī, *Kitāb al-ansāb*, i-xiii (Hyderabad 1962) v, 384 f.

⁶⁴ Heribert Busse, *Chalif und Grosskönig. Die Būyiden im Iraq (945-1055)* (Beirut 1969) 438.

al-Tanūkhī, whose strong dislike of Sufism is clearly demonstrated in the stories he narrates about the Sufis in his *Nishwār*. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm, one of Ibn Khafīf’s servants, relates in the *Sīra* how Danaqsh perished after Ibn Khafīf invoked God against him at the request of the inhabitants of Shiraz.⁶⁵

Many stories sympathetic to Ibn Khafīf and Traditions from him were transmitted by qadis of Shiraz who were Mālikī and Shāfiʿī scholars. Qadis belonging to the Mālikī and Shāfiʿī schools had been the chief judges of Fārs for several decades until 372/982. From that year the office was occupied by a Ṣāḥirī jurist and Muʿtazilī theologian, Bishr b. al-Ḥusayn, who was summoned to Shiraz by ʿAḍud al-Dawla. In the *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahāʾ* of Abū Ishāq al-Shīrāzī⁶⁶ he is referred to as the ‘chief qadi of Fārs, Iraq and all the administrative districts (*aʿmāl*) of ʿAḍud al-Dawla’. The disdainful, or at best bemused, attitude of Bishr b. al-Ḥusayn towards Sufism is well attested.⁶⁷ In al-Tanūkhī’s *Nishwār*⁶⁸ we read that Bishr complained of a predominance of the Sufis in Shiraz. Al-Tanūkhī also tells a story about a trial presided over by Bishr and attended, along with the litigants, by al-Tanūkhī’s informant, the Muʿtazilī *mutakallim* and *faqih*, Abūʾl-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sīrāfi, known as Ibn al-Sammāk. Al-Sīrāfi relates:

‘I was in Shiraz, with the city’s qadi, Abū Saʿd Bishr b. al-Ḥusayn al-Dāwūdī, when a male and a female Sufi brought their case before him. This business of Sufism had exceeded all bounds so that one could say the Sufis numbered thousands of men and women. The woman had appealed to the qadi for assistance against her husband, and when they were convoked before him, she said: “Oh Judge, this is my husband who wants to divorce me but it is not fitting for him to do so. If only you could make him desist!” Then Abū Saʿd began to arouse my amazement concerning this discourse and revealed to me how the Sufis pursue it. He said to

⁶⁵ ‘When the inquisition of Danaqsh befell Shiraz, the people complained of his injustice to the shaykh and entreated the shaykh to invoke God against him. He would not agree to do this. However, when Danaqsh’s oppression (*ẓulm*) transgressed the limits, one night the shaykh said during his prostrations: “God, let him be preoccupied with himself!” The next day I said to the shaykh: “Yesterday I heard that you invoked God.” He replied: “Oppression has transgressed the limits”. A few days later a letter arrived ordering that those who had been imprisoned be released and the confiscations be annulled. When we examined what the cause of this might be, they said: “At the foot of a/the mountain he was seized by a fit (*dar dāman-i kūh ū-rā sarʿi rasid*); he went mad and died in a most dreadful state”’.

⁶⁶ Abū Ishāq al-Firūzābādī al-Shīrāzī, *Ṭabaqāt al-fuqahāʾ*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut 1401/1981) 122.

⁶⁷ Abūʾl-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Jawzī, *Talbīs Iblīs. Naqd al-ʿilm waʾl-ʿulamāʾ*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ṣabbāḥ (Beirut 1409/1989) 380.

⁶⁸ *Nishwār* iii, 227, nr. 147.

her: "Why is it not fitting for him?" She replied: "Because when he married me, his substance (or: essence? *wa-ma' nāhu qā'im*) was persistent but now he says his substance has come to an end with regard to me (*inqaḍā ma' nāhu minnī*), whereas my substance still persists in him and has not come to an end. So he should endure patiently until my substance comes to an end in him, the same way his substance has come to an end with regard to me." Then Abū Sa'd said to me: "What do you think of this kind of *fiqh*?" Thereupon he made peace between them, and they departed without divorcing'.

The words al-Tanūkhī puts in the mouth of the female Sufi who sued her husband, also a Sufi, may be interpreted as ridiculing the Sufi concept of annihilation in God and the terminology associated with it, or possibly, such annihilation in one's partner as a pedagogical preparation for attaining the highest goal. The husband has perhaps run out of patience with his wife whom he regards as incapable of keeping up with his pace of 'spiritual' advancement.

Leaders and representatives of the two major rival schools of Mu'tazilī theology at the time of °Aḍud al-Dawla, the Bahshamiyya and the Ikhshīdiyya, participated in religious debates at the Būyid court. There was considerable tension between the two schools. This is amply illustrated by the diatribes levelled against al-Aḥḍab, the leader of the Ikhshīdiyya in Baghdad, by the prominent polemicist of the contemporary Bahshamiyya, Abū Rāshid Sa'id al-Naysābūrī. Al-Naysābūrī in his *Masā'il*⁶⁹ reproaches al-Aḥḍab for allegedly collaborating with Naṣr b. Hārūn, the Christian vizier of the Būyid sultan. Moreover, Naṣr b. Hārūn is said by al-Daylamī⁷⁰ to have acknowledged Ibn Khafif's sanctity. In this connection °Abd Allāh, the qadi of Bayḍā' and a follower of Ibn Khafif, tells a story about the conversion of the vizier to belief in the *wilāya* of Ibn Khafif. This belief may be based on the teachings of Ibn Ikhshīd, whose school al-Aḥḍab belonged to: Ibn Ikhshīd was one of the few exceptional Mu'tazilites who did not deny the possibility of saintly miracles (*karāmāt*).⁷¹ If al-Naysābūrī's allegation of collaboration between the Christian vizier and the Ikhshīdī theologian al-Aḥḍab is correct, the vizier would have been associated with the opposition to Bishr, the chief qadi of the Mu'tazila. Thus, the complexities of politics in conjunction with the rivalry between the two schools of the Mu'tazila would explain why Ibn Khafif and the Sufis of Shiraz en-

⁶⁹ *Masā'il fi'l-khilāf bayn al-baṣriyyīn wa-l-baghdādiyyīn*. Ed. Ma'n Ziyāda and Riḍwān al-Sayyid (Beirut 1979) 284 ff.; introd. 21.

⁷⁰ *Strat-i Ibn Khafif* 200.

⁷¹ Cf. Richard Gramlich, *Die Wunder der Freunde Gottes. Theologien und Erscheinungsformen des islamischen Wunders* (Wiesbaden 1987) 122.

joyed protection by some representatives of the Mu^ʿtazilī-dominated political elite and suffered oppression by others.

One of the targets of ridicule of the Mu^ʿtazilī *adīb* al-Tanūkhī in his *Nishwār al-muḥādāra* was, as we have seen, the Sufi movement of Shiraz. He attacked Ibn Khafif personally in a story⁷² which he claims to have heard from a group of trustworthy⁷³ and learned people:

‘They told me that in Shiraz there was (or: there is) a man called Ibn Khafif al-Baghdādī, the local Sufi shaykh, with whom they meet. He speaks about random thoughts (*khāṭirāt*) and Satanic insinuations (*wasāwis*), and thousands attend his assembly, (and I was told) that he is quick, intelligent and clever and that he has seduced the weak among the people to join his school’.

Later in the story, al-Tanūkhī charges Ibn Khafif with having encouraged his male disciples to have promiscuous sex with their female counterparts after a funeral he conducted for one of his followers. This he does while giving an explanation of Sufi vocabulary. The words of consolation Ibn Khafif imparted to a female Sufi whose husband had just died are meant to be an example of Sufi discourse (*kalām min kalām al-ṣūfiyya*). The first term al-Tanūkhī explains is the word *ghayr* in the question Ibn Khafif put to the women: *hāhunā ghayr*? Al-Tanūkhī translates the expression as ‘Is there anyone who disagrees with our way?’ Subsequently, a second question is quoted by means of which Ibn Khafif urges the women to consent to spending a night in orgies with his numerous male disciples: ‘What good is it to hold on with the souls to the calamities of sorrows and of tormenting them with the pain of grief, and why should we abstain from mingling (*imtizāj*) so that the lights meet, the spirits become pure, that successors are brought forth and the blessings descend?’ Of the words included in this phrase al-Tanūkhī singles out as ‘technical terms’ *imtizāj*, explained subsequently as sexual intercourse,⁷⁴ ‘meeting of lights’, i.e. ‘according to their beliefs everyone is endowed with a divine light’, *ikhhlāfāt*, i.e. ‘every one of your husbands, be he dead or (otherwise) absent, may have a successor (*khalaf*).’

⁷² *Nishwār* iii, 228 f.; also Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs* 499.

⁷³ *Nishwār* iii, 229, 6.

⁷⁴ *Imtizāj*, commingling, is explained by Abū’l-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Daylamī, ‘*Atf al-alif al-ma’lūf ‘alā’l-lām al-ma’iūf*’, ed. J. C. Vadet (Cairo 1962), as one of the terms by which various groups of people have defined love; cf. the translation by Joseph Norment Bell and al-Shāfi‘ī (Cairo: in the press), 100 f. The practice of licentious deeds, however, al-Daylamī ascribes to a set of people who hold that ‘love is knowledge’ (ibid. 99).

With this allegation of sexual promiscuity al-Tanūkhī would seem to be perpetuating the well-known stereotype of heretics as people who declare their women licit for the male members of the group. Thus, one of al-Tanūkhī's objectives in this story is to present Ibn Khafīf, whose staunch adherence to Sunni orthodoxy was widely recognized, as an *ibāhī*, rather than to educate the reader, as is one of the stated objectives of *adab* literature. At the end of his story al-Tanūkhī claims that he feels shocked (*hādhā 'indī 'aẓīm*) by the alleged incident and that he would not have reported it had his informants not been 'far removed from telling lies'.⁷⁵

Al-Tanūkhī also singles out other Sufis, Baghdādīs in particular, to be the butt of his crude humour. In the *Nishwār* two stories deal with Abū Bakr al-Shiblī (d. 334/945). The first one functions as an appendix to a long story⁷⁶ about a would-be saint who is exposed as a charlatan after having vainly tried to prove that his body is immune to boiling oil. Al-Tanūkhī claims that his informant Abū'l-Ṭayyib b. Harthama had seen al-Shiblī dip his hands into a heated cauldron which contained *fālūdhaj* pudding. Al-Shiblī is supposed to have repeatedly extracted some mouthfuls of the *fālūdhaj* from the boiling cauldron with his bare hands. A Sufi present on one of these occasions exclaimed to al-Shiblī: 'Woe unto you! See to it that you wear a thimble. Is your throat a water-tank?' (*wayhaka, i'mal anna fī yadika kashṭbān, ḥalquka muṣahraj?*). This may be an allusion to the suspicion he harboured that the master had protected himself by unsound means. The remark is also somewhat sarcastic because it proposes a stratagem to al-Shiblī which is actually rather unsuited for keeping a man exposed to fire unscathed. This story illustrates the negative attitude which the Mu'tazila had towards *karāmāt* or 'miracles of the saints.'

The second story⁷⁷ begins with a reference to the miracles and amazing actions attributed to al-Shiblī. One such action, al-Tanūkhī says, he heard about from the vizier al-Muhallabī. Al-Muhallabī reports that once when he was walking through the streets of Baghdad, he saw people gathered around a man lying prostrate on the ground. He was told that this was al-Shiblī who, a moment earlier, went past

⁷⁵ Al-Tanūkhī's narrative also contains some factual mistakes: Ibn Khafif was not known as Ibn Khafif al-Baghdādī nor were the groups constituting his Sufi community dispersed by 'Aḍud al-Dawla (*wa-shattata jumū'ahum*). On the contrary, judging by the evidence, they continued to flourish.

⁷⁶ *Nishwār* ii, 128.

⁷⁷ *Nishwār* ii, 129, nr. 65.

a seller of *harīsa* (= a dish of meat and bulghur) as the latter's crier called out: 'How long will you err?' Just then a fit came over al-Shiblī. He let out a shout and fell down unconscious. Al-Muhallabī walked on wondering to himself about al-Shiblī's 'ignorance' until he met a Sufi to whom he described what had happened. He said to the Sufi: 'Woe unto you! What is this that causes al-Shiblī to let out a shout and enter into ecstasy?' The Sufi replied: 'He believes that God is speaking to him through the tongue of the crier'. Al-Muhallabī said: 'This is most amazing. If there was another *harīsa*-seller's crier opposite the first crier and he called out: "How long will you err?" (*ilā kam taghlat*), which of the two would be the speech of God?' The Sufi said: "It is for him to give an answer to this."

Thus, the story contains criticism of al-Shiblī's ecstatic states, for which he had rightly become famous. It is demonstrated that if the reasoning put forward by a Sufi in the story to explain al-Shiblī's behaviour was followed through to its logical conclusion, one could infer the existence of two deities. Al-Tanūkhī's rejection of al-Shiblī's *wajd* may be explained in terms of Mu^ʿtazilī epistemology: knowledge of God is not obtained by inspiration (*ilhām*) or ecstasy (*wajd*), but through a process of reasoning and inference.

Among the other stories al-Tanūkhī relates about the Sufis of Baghdad, there is one⁷⁸ in which a certain Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Madā³inī acts as a jester among the Sufis with the intention of fooling them. Al-Madā³inī relates:

'I once stood in the Madīna Mosque of Baghdad before a circle of Sufis while they discoursed about random thoughts and insinuations which occur in the soul (*al-khaṭarāt wa'l-hawājis*) and on questions of Satanic whisperings (*al-wasāwis*) — I did not understand what they were saying. It then occurred to me to mock them and I said: "Oh presiding shaykh (*al-shaykh al-muṣaddir*), I have a question!" The shaykh said: "Ask it!" I asked: "Tell me, if you are a master in your subject... should a cracking afflict your vertex, by way of knowledge, while you are under the will of God, will anything injure your qualities, while you are attached to the rope of Omnipotence, o champion?" Those gathered around the shaykh thought this was a serious question and began to discuss a possible answer. But the shaykh understood I was making fun of them. Fearing he would have them do me some harm, I ran away'.

The question: 'Should a cracking afflict your vertex... while you are under the will of God?' seems to be mocking the belief in divine predestination which the Sufis, as Sunni Muslims, adhered to. The Sufis are also derided for being too stupid to distinguish between a

⁷⁸ Ibid. i, 99, nr. 48.

serious question and a sarcastic joke. The shaykh, however, is presented as clever (*faṭīn*), just as in the story about Ibn Khafif, where it is said that the shaykh lured to his school those who were intellectually feeble. In both stories the underlying assumption is that the Sufi shaykh is an outright charlatan.

In many of al-Tanūkhī's stories we meet with al-Ḥallāj who is portrayed as a very negative figure. In one story⁷⁹ the miracle ascribed to al-Ḥallāj of going without food for a month or so is represented as a deception. In another story⁸⁰ al-Tanūkhī depicts al-Ḥallāj as preoccupied with enticing the Shiis to believe in him. Al-Ḥallāj is said to have tried to win the Shii theologian Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī as a recruit, but then gave up hope of doing so when he realized that Abū Sahl was only pretending to believe in him. Al-Nawbakhtī asked al-Ḥallāj to use his miraculous powers to cure his baldness, but at the same time he made it clear that he would never believe in him. The story concludes with the assertion that al-Ḥallāj tried to win over many different groups of people by promising to satisfy some particular desire they had. These attempts to win followers is again qualified as 'deception' or 'enticement' (*istighwā*⁸¹).

Al-Tanūkhī also gives an account⁸¹ of the proceedings of the trial which led to al-Ḥallāj's condemnation. He mentions that al-Ḥallāj repudiated letters from his missionaries who allegedly addressed him with titles which refer to God or the Prophet. It is mentioned that al-Ḥallāj had put forward the idea that a symbolic enactment of the *hajj* be permitted as a substitute for a Muslim who is physically incapable of performing the pilgrimage. Al-Tanūkhī quotes the conflicting fatwas issued by two leading *faqīhs* concerning al-Ḥallāj. He reports that the more severe of the fatwas came to be adopted and he expresses his approval of this judgement.⁸² The story ends with a reference to the alleged belief of some followers of al-Ḥallāj (*Ḥallājiyya*) that a work-horse was killed in his place and that al-Ḥallāj will return at some time in the future. Al-Tanūkhī dismisses these beliefs as forms of stupidity.

The existence of contacts between the Mu^ctazila of Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʿī and al-Ḥallāj is asserted in another story related by al-

⁷⁹ Ibid. i, 159 f., nr. 81.

⁸⁰ Ibid. i, 161, nr. 82.

⁸¹ Ibid. i, 162-4, nr. 83.

⁸² 'In his matter the *farwā* of Abū ʿUmar was followed, in view of what was known and learned of his affair and what was manifest of his apostasy and disbelief, and of his seducing the people, etc.', *Nishwār* i, 163.

Tanūkhī.⁸³ In this case al-Ḥallāj is implicitly categorized a trickster on the authority of the Mu[°]tazilī leader. Al-Tanūkhī sets out to explain that the people of Ahwāz and the neighbouring districts were deceived (*iftatana*) by al-Ḥallāj and by the ‘foods and dishes which he produced out of season’ as well as by the dirhams he called ‘Dirhams of omnipotence’ (*darāhim al-quḍra*). Al-Jubbā[°]i heard about all this and is said to have instructed his students as to how to prepare themselves in order to expose al-Ḥallāj’s alleged prestidigitation.⁸⁴ Subsequently to this, al-Ḥallāj is said to have departed from Ahwāz.

In another story⁸⁵ the method al-Ḥallāj employed in writing books is described by al-Tanūkhī as ‘following the way of the Sufis, in accordance with mad raving’ (*ft’l-hawas*). However, al-Tanūkhī concedes that when al-Ḥallāj uttered intelligible words, his art of letter writing was attractive and his enunciation intelligent (*kāna tarassuluhū ḥasanan wa-talaffuzuhū malīḥan*).⁸⁶

Al-Tanūkhī also sets out⁸⁷ to ridicule al-Ḥallāj’s followers who are said to have organized themselves in Tustar around one of al-Ḥallāj’s sons. They are represented as believing that the divinity (*al-lāhūt*) which resided in al-Ḥallāj subsequently took up residence in his son (*ḥulūl*). According to the same story, another member of the local school believed that the spirit of the Prophet Muḥammad had also settled inside him.⁸⁸ The theological point of this story is the denial that God or the ‘spirit of Muḥammad’ can dwell in chosen individuals: By highlighting what, in their claims, appears to be a logical

⁸³ *Nishwār* i, 172, nr. 88.

⁸⁴ ‘These things are being kept at places where ruses can be employed. Lead him inside one of your houses, not to a place of his, and enjoin on him that he produce two black and red pearls. If he does that, then declare him truthful’.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* i, 169, nr. 85.

⁸⁶ To illustrate this point al-Tanūkhī relates that al-Ḥallāj once remarked about the sad tune of a wind-instrument he heard nearby: ‘This is Satan’s lamentation over the world’ (*hādhā nawḥ Iblīs ‘alā’l-dunyā*).

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* i, 173-176, nr. 89-91.

⁸⁸ Al-Tanūkhī illustrates these alleged beliefs with a story (i, 173, nr. 89) he heard from someone whom the Ḥallājiyya in Basra tried to make acknowledge their leader as master: ‘I visited the leader of the Ḥallājiyya and they thought that I sought guidance. Then the leader spoke in my presence and this man was cross-eyed so that his eyes were directed to the ceiling of the house, while his mind was boiling in that madness (*yajīsh bi-dhālīka’l-hawas*). When we left, the man [with me] said: “Do you believe?” I said: “I have never disbelieved your words more than now. This person in your view holds the rank of the Prophet? Then why does he not cure himself of being cross-eyed?” He replied: “You fool! As if he were really cross-eyed! He simply directs his eyes upwards to the heavenly kingdom”’.

contradiction, the Ḥallājiyya are presented as being irrational, hence, astray from the truth.

Another Sufi ridiculed by al-Tanūkhī is Ruwaym b. Aḥmad from Baghdad.⁸⁹ He transmits Jaʿfar al-Khuldī's judgement on this Sufi: 'He who wants to confide a secret may confide it to Ruwaym, for he kept hidden his love for this world for forty years'. This is an allusion to Ruwaym's promotion from relative poverty to the rank of deputy to the chief qadi of Baghdad, Ismāʿīl b. Ishāq. Indeed, Ruwaym's changed condition drew criticism from some of his Sufi colleagues. According to ʿAbd Allāh-i Anṣārī,⁹⁰ however, this change in no way affected the inner state of Ruwaym who was 'great in dissimulation' (*talbīs*).

In a story of the *al-Faraj baʿd al-shidda*-type,⁹¹ al-Tanūkhī ridicules the Sufi concept of *tawakkul*, as understood and practised by its most extreme quietistic adherents. The protagonist of the story is introduced as a Sufi who used to speak to his companions about '*tawakkul*, sustenance (*arzāq*), and the weakness and strength of the soul in their regard'. The Sufi takes an oath 'not to savour anything other than a *fālūdhaj* pudding to be sent [to him] in a bowl', and 'not to eat except after having been urged to do so by means of an oath'. The story goes on to relate that the Sufi travels to a distant place and nearly perishes in a mosque after having been deprived of food for days. Eventually he is forced to eat by a slave-girl when she threatens to beat him to death. Later the slave-girl explains the bizarre circumstances that led her to force the Sufi to eat the *fālūdhaj*: Her master, a village-headman, had ordered a *fālūdhaj* pudding to be prepared for him but then dishing out the pudding had been delayed. This had angered the headman so much that he took an oath: He would divorce his wife if anyone other than a stranger in the village ate the dish. The Sufi's misfortune turns out to be the cause of the deliverance of the headman (from having to divorce his wife). Here al-Tanūkhī rejects the Sufi doctrine of *tawakkul* showing how precarious the consequences of this doctrine are for the Sufi protagonist: with his form of 'trust in God' the Sufi is presented as suicidal. However, the anti-Sufi aspect of the story is subordinate to the more important concern of demonstrating the workings of God's provi-

⁸⁹ Ibid. iii, 120, nr. 77.

⁹⁰ Anṣārī, *Ṭabaqāt* 262 f.

⁹¹ *Nishwār* iii, 76 f., nr. 54; also Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs* 428.

dence.⁹²

Absolute *tawakkul* as a distinctive feature of the Sufism of his day is also criticized by al-Tanūkhī elsewhere in the *Nishwār*.⁹³ A case in point is the reported claim by Ja^ʿfar al-Khuldī that he had performed the *hajj* fifty-six times *ʿalāʾl-madhhab*, i.e. by trusting in God and without provisions or riding-beast.

However, in the story of the revenge of a grieving mother elephant,⁹⁴ the Sufi protagonist Ibrāhīm al-Khawwāṣ is depicted with outright positive traits. Having suffered shipwreck, al-Khawwāṣ vows not to eat any elephant meat. When a young elephant is caught and subsequently eaten by al-Khawwāṣ' companions, he chooses to abstain from the meal. When the revengeful mother elephant crushes his companions to death, al-Khawwāṣ survives the carnage and is returned to civilization on the elephant's back. Theological aspects of the story include just retribution for good and bad deeds, as well as God's wisdom which is also manifest in the animal kingdom: the revengeful elephant distinguishes between the men who ate her young and the person who abstained. Like the story which focuses on *tawakkul*, this narrative is incorporated in al-Tanūkhī's book *al-Faraj baʿd al-shidda*. The general theme of the work is God's unfailing mercy towards those who bear tribulation with fortitude. The stories demonstrate that by acting thus the latter bring about their own deliverance.⁹⁵

Many of the stories referred to above attest to the rationalist outlook of the Mu^ʿtazila. The Sufis of the early and middle ʿAbbāsīd periods considered this outlook inappropriate. Generally speaking, rationality was deemed 'frivolous' with regard to religion but especially when it came to the more essential questions concerning man's relationship to God. Speculation on religious questions was cautioned against out of fear that an error might endanger salvation. The ambition to know

⁹² For a literary analysis of this story see Julia Ashtiyani, 'Al-Tanūkhī's *al-Faraj baʿd al-shidda* as a Literary Source', *Arabica Felix* (1991) 108-128.

⁹³ *Nishwār* iii, 119, nr. 70.

⁹⁴ *Nishwār* iii, 195, nr. 127.

⁹⁵ In the *Nishwār*, al-Tanūkhī includes among his literary materials on Sufis a number of examples which consist of little more than a sentence, i.e. an utterance by a Sufi and an *isnād*. Intended criticism of the Sufis does not seem to be discernible in them (cf. *ibid.* iii, 123, nr. 81; iii, 122, nr. 79; iii, 121, nr. 78; iii, 119, nr. 75). These materials reflect al-Tanūkhī's interest in pithy phrases and lexicographical rarities, *nawādir*. For instance, his lexicographical interests may be the reason why he quotes a saying of the Sufi Ja^ʿfar al-Khuldī (*ibid.* iii, 117, nr. 73) in which the latter contrasts the sciences of *ḥadīth* and Sufism (*ʿilm al-khiraqʿ ʿilm al-waraq*).

more than the Koran and *ḥadīth* was considered blasphemous pride.⁹⁶ Polemics as a basic trait of rationalist theology was viewed as unseemly in religious discourse. The relevant *ḥadīth* often quoted by the Sufis in their tracts⁹⁷ stipulated that there be 'no dispute in religion' (*lā mirā'a fi'l-dīn*). The rationalist theologians were also accused of pursuing their science solely because of worldly ambitions.⁹⁸ Sufis contrasted disputation (*mujādala*) as engaged in by the speculative theologians with the 'fraternal counsel' (*waṣiyya*) which they ideally practised.

The antagonism in the attitudes of Sufism and Mu'tazila towards the concept of the transcendence of God is expressed in a pronouncement of the fourth/tenth century Egyptian Sufi Abū °Alī b. al-Kātib: 'The Mu'tazila have striven to eliminate anthropomorphic elements from the concept of deity (or: declared God transcendent) by way of reason (*nazzahū'llāha min ḥaythu'l-°uqūl/°aql*) but they have failed. The Sufis have done so by way of religious knowledge (*nazzahūhu min ḥaythu'l-°ilm*) and they have succeeded'.⁹⁹ The dogma of a created Koran was a consequence of the Mu'tazila's reflections on the oneness of God.

The Sufis, as natural allies of the traditionists, criticized the Mu'tazila for their scepticism vis-à-vis *ḥadīth* and the ultimate source of *ḥadīth* transmission, the Companions of the Prophet. For their part, the Mu'tazila looked down upon the Sufis as 'adherents of blind imitation, reports and traditions, who transmit a report and its opposite, who believe in both while one of them abrogates the other...'.¹⁰⁰ Important Sufi personalities in the third and fourth centuries shared the traditionists' view that the discord between the *ṣahāba*, which the Mu'tazila highlighted and discussed, ought to be suppressed and passed over in silence: Ibn Khafīf relates in the *Sīra*¹⁰¹ that when Muḥammad b. °Alī al-Kattānī, one of his masters

⁹⁶ Cf. Tilman Nagel, *Geschichte der islamischen Theologie von Mohammed bis zur Gegenwart* (München 1994) 133 ff.

⁹⁷ Cf. Ibn Khafīf, *Iqtiṣād*, faṣl 46.

⁹⁸ Ibn Khafīf warns the novice: 'Be on guard and endeavour to shun the assemblies of those contemporaries given to theological speculation (*ahl al-nazzār*) who are characterized by disputation (*mujādala*). For the Prophet forbade this and strictly restrained (his followers) from it. He said that it is unbelief to argue about the Koran. Firstly, that would engender hatred and sow discord among them. Then it would cause a person to engage in hate and enmity while striving after a position of leadership (*riyāsa*)' (ibid.).

⁹⁹ al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt* 386 f.; al-Qushayrī, *Risāla* 29.

¹⁰⁰ Bishr b. al-Ḥusayn, in Ibn °Asākir, *Tabyīn* 119.

¹⁰¹ *Sīrat-i Ibn Khafīf* 65, 16 f.

in Mekka, asked the Prophet in a dream about the ‘temptations’ (*fitanhā*) by which the Companions were afflicted in their mutual relations’, the Prophet asked al-Kattānī to keep silence (*kuffa ʿalayka lisānak*).

The Sufis held the Mu^ʿtazilī concept regarding *qadar* to be an infringement on God’s omnipotence and dignity. This is illustrated in the derogatory story which Ibn Khafīf tells about the Mu^ʿtazilī theologian.¹⁰² The early fourth-century Sufi Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī (d. 320/932) even compared the Mu^ʿtazila, on the basis of their belief in free will, with Pharaoh who had claimed to be God: ‘Pharaoh openly claimed lordship for himself (*iddaʿā Firʿawn al-rubūbiyya*); the Mu^ʿtazila do so covertly. They say: “I do whatever I want”’.¹⁰³ Likewise, when addressing a student of the Mu^ʿtazilī leader al-Jubbāʾī, al-Ḥallāj explains his stance regarding *qadar*. He maintains that the motives behind God’s actions are unfathomable to human reason, and that man’s actions are not governed by free will.¹⁰⁴ The Mu^ʿtazilī concept of God’s justice (*al-ʿadl*) which implies that God redresses any wrong that man suffers undeservedly is also ridiculed by the Sufis, as for instance in Ibn Khafīf’s *Sira*.¹⁰⁵

The Sufis’ main criticism of Mu^ʿtazilī rationalism, which focuses on the Mu^ʿtazila’s rejection of the *ḥadīth* and their view of *qadar*, is shared by Sunnism at large. Moreover, the Sufis differed from the Mu^ʿtazila in that they believed that knowledge of ‘the unseen’ (*al-ghayb*) can be acquired by means of inspiration,¹⁰⁶ whereas the Mu^ʿtazila taught that knowledge of God could only be attained by a process of ratiocination and not by intuition.¹⁰⁷ In their commitment to the belief that God can be known through some form of inspiration and not only by the prophets, the Sufis shared common ground

¹⁰² Ibid. 186-9.

¹⁰³ al-Qushayrī, *Risāla* 5, 1-6.

¹⁰⁴ ‘As God brought forth bodies without cause, he also brought forth the attributes (*ṣifātihā*) contained in them without cause, and as man does not own the root of his action (*lā yamlik al-ʿabd aṣla fiʿlihī*), he also does not own his action’ (al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt* 311). It is precisely this knowledge that ‘all creation’s movement and rest is the action of God alone (*ḥarakat al-khalq wa-sukūnihim fiʿl Allāh waḥdahū*)’ which al-Junayd defines as the contents of *tawḥīd* (al-Qushayrī, *Risāla* 5, 7 ff.).

¹⁰⁵ *Sirat-i Ibn Khafīf* 186-189.

¹⁰⁶ *Ilhām, mukāshafa*; op. cit. 66.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. al-Jāhīz, in his *Kitāb al-masāʾil waʾl-jawābāt fiʾl-maʿrifa*; G. Vajda, ‘La connaissance naturelle de Dieu selon al-Ġāhiz, critiquée par les Mu^ʿtazilites’, *Studia Islamica* xxiv (1966); van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft* iii, 382; *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, ed. A.F.L. Beeston et al., iii vols. (Cambridge 1983-1992) ii, 85.

with the Shiis.

From the contents of al-Tanūkhī's *Nishwār* presented above, we may conclude that the Mu^ctazila primarily criticized the Sufis for being insincere, ignorant and irrational. The Sufis are insincere because they are glad to be promoted from poverty to worldly positions in order to become rich (the case of Ruwyam).¹⁰⁸ They pretend to work miracles (as in the case of al-Shiblī and al-Ḥallāj).¹⁰⁹ They deceive the weak-minded into joining their school by means of trickery or by appealing to the base motives of potential converts (al-Ḥallāj).¹¹⁰ They are licentious in their relations with fellow-Sufis of the opposite sex (Ibn Khafif).¹¹¹ The Sufis are ignorant and irrational because they can be hoodwinked by a buffoon (al-Madāʿinī).¹¹² Their terminology and science ('the *fiqh* of the Sufis') is cause for ridicule (Qadi Bishr regarding the Sufi couple in the lawcourt).¹¹³ Madness governs how the Sufis compose their books (al-Ḥallāj).¹¹⁴ Their concept of *tawakkul* runs the risk of having suicidal effects for its practitioners.¹¹⁵ They hold superstitious beliefs, as for example that certain prayer-formulas¹¹⁶ and talisman-like objects have magic powers.¹¹⁷ They claim to hold the rank of the Companions of the Prophet and believe that God or the spirit of Muḥammad dwells within them (*ḥulūl*), whereas they cannot even cure themselves of being cross-eyed.¹¹⁸

Besides asserting that the Sufis are insincere, ignorant and irrational, al-Tanūkhī criticizes them for claiming to be able to work miracles. The stories involving Sufis in the *Nishwār* expressly maintain that the great Sufis — such as al-Shiblī, Ibn Khafif and al-Ḥallāj — are not really saints, nor are the miracles (*karāmāt*) attributed to them accepted as saintly gifts. On the contrary, any miraculous behaviour associated with the Sufis is due to sorcery (*siḥr*) and ultimately stems from Satan whose purpose is to lead man into per-

108 *Nishwār* iii, 120.

109 Ibid. i, 159 f.; ibid. ii, 128; and ibid. i, 172.

110 Ibid. i, 161.

111 Ibid. iii, 228 f.

112 Ibid. i, 99.

113 Ibid. iii, 227.

114 Ibid. i, 169.

115 Ibid. iii, 76 f.

116 Ibid. iii, 198.

117 Ibid. iii, 199.

118 Ibid. i, 173-6.

dition.¹¹⁹ The majority of the Mu^ʿtazila denied that miracles were a confirmation of the sainthood of pious individuals. Only *mu^ʿjizāt*, miracles confirming the prophethood of the historical Messengers (and *āyāt*, 'signs' of God), were accepted as real. Among the arguments advanced by the Mu^ʿtazila for rejecting *karāmāt* was the claim that miracles of this kind could not be distinguished from magic.¹²⁰ The stories about a wish-fulfilling charm and talisman a Sufi was given seem to be motivated by the kindred denial by some Mu^ʿtazila of the belief that prayers are answered by God.¹²¹

Thus the original Mu^ʿtazilī criticism, as revealed in al-Tanūkhī's stories involving Sufis, seems to be that the Sufis had elaborated a science based on an apparently irrational epistemology. As a consequence of this epistemology, the Sufis claimed to have become receptacles of God's indwelling and to be able to work miracles. The notion that the Sufis are distinguished by God by being able to perform miracles was perceived by the Mu^ʿtazila as undermining the unique position of the Prophet, which in their view rests on the *mu^ʿjiza* which God effected through him. If the status of the Prophet is challenged by persons distinguished by the performance of miracles, the sharia itself, whose guarantor is the Prophet, might eventually be rendered irrelevant. Preventing this from happening is a requirement of the Mu^ʿtazilī principle of actively defending the

¹¹⁹ Prestidigitation such as al-Tanūkhī attributes to al-Ḥallāj in some stories was commonly associated with sorcery; cf. Gramlich, *Wunder* 131.

¹²⁰ Gramlich, op. cit. 106 f. Other arguments the Mu^ʿtazila employed include the following: 1) If a miracle is performed by someone who is not a prophet as proof of his enjoying divine distinction, it could be performed at any time, so that it would eventually lose its miraculous character. 2) If miracles could be performed by non-prophets, this would detract from the pre-eminence of the prophets. But the obligation to obey prophets is based on the fact that they perform miracles. 3) A miracle provides evidence by way of demonstrating the distinctive and exceptional (*ibāna wa-takḥṣīs*; 'the argument of Abū Ḥāshim al-Jubbāʾī'). Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār explains: 'A miracle proves the special distinction of the prophets above anyone else. Were it not for miracles, they would not be different from other people' (cf. Gramlich, op. cit. 109). 4) If miracles could be performed by non-prophets, this would diminish the effectiveness of a miracle to prove prophethood (cf. ibid. 98).

¹²¹ Gramlich, op. cit. 106, mentions the Andalusian theologian Ibn Ḥazm as an example. The author of Kāzarūnī's vita, Maḥmūd b. ʿUthmān, on the other hand, attributes to the Mu^ʿtazila at large the belief that God answers the prayers of both the righteous and sinners [Maḥmūd b. ʿUthmān, *Firdaws ul-murshidiyya fi asrār al-ṣamadiyya*, ed. ʾIraj-i Afshār (Teheran 1358) 66, 11 f.].

precepts of divine law (*al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wa'l-nahy 'an al-munkar*, 'to enjoin the good and to forbid the reprehensible'). This principle, inherited from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, would seem to be the fundamental basis of Mu'tazilī opposition to Sufism.¹²²

¹²² Cf. Hellmut Ritter, 'Studien zur islamischen Frömmigkeit. 1. Ḥasan al-Baṣrī', *Der Islam* xxi (1933) 1-83; 66.

LE PROCES POSTHUME D'IBN ʿARABĪ

MICHEL CHODKIEWICZ

Dans l'introduction d'un ouvrage publié à Médine en 1990 un auteur wahhabite, le Dr. Mūsā b. Sulaymān al-Darwīsh, exprime son souci de défendre l'islam contre les manœuvres perfides des orientalistes et de leurs disciples musulmans (cette dernière remarque visant particulièrement Abū'l-ʿAlā ʿAfīfī, éditeur des *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*). Aussi se réjouit-il d'avoir eu la bonne fortune lors d'une visite au Caire de découvrir dans la bibliothèque d'Al-Azhar et de pouvoir offrir au lecteur un recueil de textes qui ont en commun de dénoncer la doctrine impie d'Ibn ʿArabī. Le premier de ces textes est d'Ibn Taymiyya. Le dernier est une fatwa de Saʿd Allāh Efendī (ob. 1538-1539) qui fut mufti ḥanafite à Istanbul. En réponse à une longue question, ce juriste donne son avis en quelques lignes: celui, dit-il, qui accorde créance à la doctrine d'Ibn ʿArabī ou simplement hésite à se prononcer sur son caractère hérétique, celui-là est un *kāfir*. S'il persiste sans se repentir, il doit être mis à mort.¹ Cette sentence, nous le verrons, est remarquablement indulgente.

Qu'un wahhābite exhume quelques écrits anciens hostiles au Shaykh al-akbar n'a évidemment rien de surprenant. Ibn ʿArabī était déjà l'une des cibles de Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb qui accusait les syriens de "l'adorer" (*yaʿbudūna Ibn ʿArabī*) et de faire de sa tombe une idole.² La polémique anti-akbarienne occupe toujours une place importante et même souvent centrale dans la plupart des publications saoudiennes récentes qui s'attaquent au soufisme dès qu'elles abordent des problèmes doctrinaux: Ibn ʿArabī y apparaît comme l'*imām* des soufis, celui dont l'enseignement pernicieux, de manière ouverte ou cachée, est partout présent.³ Cela est vrai de simples brochures de propagande comme les *Faḍāʾih al-ṣūfiyya* du

¹ *Rasāʾil wa-fatāwā fī dhamm Ibn ʿArabī al-ṣūfī* (Médine 1990) 122.

² Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Majmūʿat al-fatāwā wa'l-rasāʾil wa'l-ajwiba* (Beyrouth 1987) 46.

³ Ce diagnostic, à vrai dire, me paraît fort lucide. Cf. M. Chodkiewicz, *Un océan sans rivage* (Paris 1992) (*An Ocean without Shore*, Albany 1993) introduction.

shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahmān ‘Abd al-Khālīq⁴ selon lequel, pour Ibn Arabī, “Iblīs est une partie de Dieu” comme d’ouvrages plus ambitieux tel celui que le Dr. Šābir Tu‘ayma a consacré aux croyances et pratiques des soufis⁵ et où la critique de l’auteur des *Fuṣūṣ* occupe plusieurs dizaines de pages. Je limiterai toutefois à ces brèves remarques — pour une raison que j’exposerai bientôt — mon incursion dans le champ de la littérature wahhābite contemporaine. Je me bornerai de même à rappeler, sans y insister, la position bien connue des *salafiyya*, telle qu’elle s’exprime dans le *Tafsīr al-manār*⁶ mais aussi dans d’innombrables livres ou articles depuis plus d’un siècle. Les arguments utilisés dans les campagnes anti-akbariennes inspirées par ces deux courants ou par les mouvements qui en sont issus sont, à vrai dire, à peu près identiques. Au delà de leurs effets directs, aisément repérables, c’est à dire des convictions militantes qu’elles suscitent dans certains secteurs du public musulman, ces diatribes ont des conséquences indirectes qui méritent de retenir l’attention. Désormais, au Proche-orient, et particulièrement en Egypte, les dignitaires officiels du *taṣawwuf*, anxieux d’écarter tout soupçon d’hétérodoxie, désavouent généralement avec un empressement peu glorieux le soufisme “étranger à l’islam” que représentent Ibn ‘Arabī et ses élèves: “ils n’ont plus aujourd’hui”, assure d’ailleurs le shaykh de la *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya shādhiliyya*, “ni disciples ni héritiers”.⁷ Bien que

⁴ *Faḍā’ih al-ṣūfiyya* (Riyāḍ 1991, 2ème ed.); voir. 23 f. et 58.

⁵ *Al-ṣūfiyya mu’taqadan wa-maslakan* (Riyāḍ 1985) 388. Sur Ibn ‘Arabī, voir notamment 165 à 183 et 205-245. Parmi ces polémiques wahhābites récentes contre Ibn ‘Arabī seraient à relever aussi divers ouvrages relatifs aux *ṭuruq* et en particulier ceux d’‘Abd al-Rahmān Dimashqiyya dans la collection *Dirāsāt fi’l-taṣawwuf*, publiée à Riyāḍ.

⁶ *Tafsīr al-manār* vii, 439; ix, 170. Sur ce point, comme sur beaucoup d’autres, il est difficile de discerner dans le *Tafsīr al-manār* une position proprement *salafiyya* et distincte de celle du wahhābisme, dont l’influence sur Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā est bien connue. On sait que Muḥammad ‘Abduh avait rédigé vers 1874 une *Risālat al-wāridāt* où il exprimait son adhésion à la doctrine de la *waḥdat al-wujūd*. Au cours des années trente, un shaykh algérien, Aḥmad b. ‘Alīwa, se fera d’ailleurs un plaisir de rappeler certaines phrases particulièrement compromettantes de cet écrit dans sa riposte à un article paru dans la revue de Benbadis, *al-Shihāb*. (Ce texte a été repris dans le recueil d’articles du Shaykh Ibn ‘Alīwa intitulé *Risālat al-Nāṣir Ma’rūf* publié à Damas, ca. 1960; voir, sur Ibn ‘Arabī, 58 et 112-115). Bien que l’évolution d’‘Abduh l’ait entraîné fort loin des idées exprimées dans son oeuvre de jeunesse, on peut penser que, s’il avait vécu assez longtemps pour en contrôler la rédaction, certains passages du *Tafsīr* auraient exposé des vues certes hostiles à Ibn ‘Arabī mais plus personnelles et peut-être plus nuancées.

⁷ Interview du Shaykh Muḥammad Zakī Ibrāhīm dans le no. d’août 1992, 43, de la

nombre de facteurs extra-doctrinaux soient à prendre en considération dans l'analyse d'une affaire compliquée, on peut voir une manifestation de cette prudence dans la condamnation, en 1975, par le "Conseil suprême soufi" de la *Tabri'at al-dhimma* du Shaykh Muḥammad 'Uthmān al-Burhānī (ob. 1983): le livre édité sous son nom n'est en effet qu'une vaste anthologie où figurent de longs extraits — très précisément référencés — d'œuvres d'Ibn 'Arabī et d'Abd al-Karīm al-Jilī. Ce sont donc ces derniers qui en fait sont visés par les chefs d'accusation retenus contre Muḥammad 'Uthmān.⁸

La même année 1975 vit s'ouvrir une controverse célèbre où, cette fois, Ibn 'Arabī lui-même était expressément mis en cause. Je me trouvais au Caire lorsque, le vendredi 14 novembre, le quotidien *Al-Akḥbār* publia une "lettre ouverte au ministre de la culture" signée du Shaykh Kamāl Aḥmad 'Awn, directeur d'Al-Azhar à Ṭanṭā, qui dénonçait les *Futūḥāt* comme un ouvrage blasphématoire et s'indignait du patronage accordé par le ministère à l'édition critique établie par le Dr. Osman Yaḥyā.⁹ Cette première salve fut suivie de beaucoup d'autres sous forme de conférences et d'articles.¹⁰ Le zèle d'un député de Ṭanṭā (coïncidence qui n'a évidemment rien de fortuit) devait, on le sait, amener une commission du Parlement égyptien à décider en février 1979 d'interdire la diffusion des *Futūḥāt*. Je ne m'étendrai pas sur les remous provoqués par cette décision qui dût finalement être annulée. Un article de Th. Emil

revue *al-Taṣawwuf al-islāmī*, organe du "Conseil soufi suprême" égyptien.

⁸ Sur les polémiques autour de la Burhāniyya et de son chef, voir l'article de P. J. Luizard, 'Le rôle des confréries dans le système politique égyptien', *Maghreb-Mashrek* cxxxii (1991) et celui de Valerie Hoffman-Ladd, 'Devotion to the Prophet and his Family in Egyptian Sufism', *IJMES* xxiv (1992) 615-637, ainsi que le chapitre 10 de l'ouvrage du même auteur, *Sufism, Mystics and Saints in Modern Egypt* (University of South Carolina 1995). Voir également mes remarques dans 'Le modèle prophétique de la sainteté en islam', *Al-Masaq* vii (1995).

⁹ J'avais précisément rendez-vous de bon matin ce jour-là avec O. Yaḥyā et lui fit lire cette "lettre ouverte" qui, sur le moment, lui parut plus ridicule qu'inquiétante.

¹⁰ Parmi les innombrables articles suscités par cette affaire signalons: la réponse d'O. Yaḥyā dans *al-Akḥbār* le 8 mars 1976 et la réplique de Kamāl Aḥmad 'Awn dans ce même journal le 9 avril 1976 (jour où paraissait, dans *al-Ahrām*, une déclaration d'Ibrāhīm Madkūr, préfacer de l'édition des *Futūḥāt*). O. Yaḥyā répondit de nouveau à Kamāl Aḥmad 'Awn dans *al-Akḥbār* le 14 mai 1976. Kamāl 'Awn entreprit d'autre part de développer sa dénonciation des erreurs d'Ibn 'Arabī dans six numéros successifs de la revue *Livā' al-islām* à partir d'avril 1976.

Homerin¹¹ décrit les principales étapes de cette affaire. Plusieurs membres du “Conseil suprême soufi” se décidèrent à intervenir publiquement en faveur d’une levée de la censure (le Shaykh al-Sutūhī, le Dr. Abū’l-Wafā al-Taftāzānī, le Dr. Kamāl Ja‘far)¹² mais assez tardivement et à un moment où la conjonction d’une volonté politique d’“ouverture” et de vigoureuses protestations d’intellectuels “laïcs” avait assuré le succès d’une solution libérale. Bien des signes me donnent à penser qu’aujourd’hui, quinze ans après cette bruyante querelle, la pratique de la *taqiyya* en ces matières est encore plus fréquente chez les notables que par le passé.

Quoiqu’il en soit, je n’ai évoqué quelques aspects récents de la polémique contre le Shaykh al-akbar que pour rappeler qu’elle n’est jamais éteinte. Son intérêt est donc d’une toute autre nature que celui qu’on peut porter à la condamnation de Siger de Brabant ou de Maître Eckhart. Si, pourtant, je renonce à proposer une analyse détaillée de ses formes les plus actuelles, c’est pour une raison que suggère le titre donné à ces réflexions. L’emploi du singulier (*le* procès) y est délibéré: de siècle en siècle, nous ne nous trouvons pas, en dépit des apparences, devant une série de procès mais devant un même procès indéfiniment recommencé, avec les mêmes accusations appuyées sur les mêmes arguments. Un inventaire exhaustif des milliers de pages qui ont été écrites contre Ibn ‘Arabī — et dont la masse s’accroît chaque année — est bien entendu impossible. Les listes qu’a dressées O. Yaḥyā¹³ n’ont qu’un caractère indicatif. Très incomplètes à partir du seizième siècle, elles ne tiennent compte

¹¹ Th. Emil Homerin, ‘Ibn ‘Arabī in the People’s Assembly’, *Middle East Journal* xl (1986) 462-477. Il resterait beaucoup à dire sur les dessous politiques de cette affaire comme aussi sur les luttes d’influence — notamment au sein d’al-Azhar — qui en expliquent certains aspects. Le recteur d’al-Azhar, ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd (ob. 1978), dont l’intérêt bienveillant pour Ibn ‘Arabī et pour le soufisme en général était de notoriété publique, fut au départ l’une des cibles de cette campagne. Il était d’ailleurs expressément visé dans l’un des articles de Kamāl ‘Awn (*Liwā’ al-islām*, déc. 1976, 45) à propos du chapitre 2 de son livre *al-Madrasa al-shādhiliyya al-ḥadītha* (Le Caire, ca. 1968). Ce chapitre, où il évoquait la constitution en Egypte au début du siècle d’une association “Akbariyya”, n’est en fait que la reprise d’une brochure publiée par lui (s. d.; lorsque j’en fis l’acquisition au Caire au printemps 1954, elle était de publication récente), *al-Faylasūf al-muslim*, ‘Abd al-Wāḥid Yaḥyā.

¹² Abū’l-Wafā al-Taftāzānī est l’auteur, entre autres, d’un volumineux ouvrage *Ibn Sab‘in wa-falsafatuhu al-ṣūfīyya*. Le Dr. Kamāl Ja‘far a notamment édité plusieurs traités d’Ibn Masarra.

¹³ *Histoire et classification de l’oeuvre de Ibn ‘Arabī* (Damas 1964) i, 114 f.; édition du *Naṣṣ al-nuṣṣ* de Ḥaydar-i Āmulī (“Le Texte des Textes”), (Paris-Téhéran 1975) 36-65 du texte arabe.

d'autre part que des sources arabes et ignorent les innombrables écrits rédigés en d'autres langues dans toutes les régions du monde musulman: Iran, Inde, Indonésie. Mes propres recherches portent d'ailleurs elles aussi sur le domaine arabophone. Sur les autres secteurs du *dār al-islām*, mes connaissances sont lacunaires et le plus souvent de seconde main. Je ne crois pas me tromper cependant en affirmant que des études pluridisciplinaires couvrant en étendue et en profondeur la totalité du champ de la littérature anti-akbarienne n'apporteraient guère de surprise: dès l'époque mamlouke, le cadre du débat est tracé, la liste des thèses condamnables arrêtée, les armes scripturaires fourbies et prêtes pour un long usage.¹⁴ Certaines des controverses ultérieures reprendront l'ensemble du réquisitoire; d'autres s'attacheront plus particulièrement à la dénonciation d'une ou de quelques unes seulement des thèses hérétiques cataloguées. Mais ces rhapsodies, quels qu'en soient les signataires, cousent avec plus ou moins d'habileté des morceaux dont chacun appartient originellement à une production littéraire qui s'étend du début du quatorzième à la fin du quinzième siècle — disons de 1305, date de la lettre d'Ibn Taymiyya au shaykh al-Manbijī, à la mort, en 1497, de Muḥammad al-Sakhāwī, auteur d'*al-Qawl al-munbī ʿan tarjamāt Ibn al-ʿArabī*. C'est donc à l'examen de quelques épisodes majeurs de la polémique au cours de cette période que je vais m'attacher dans les remarques qui suivent.

Comme l'indique d'autre part le titre du présent exposé, le procès d'Ibn ʿArabī est un procès *posthume*. Contrairement à des légendes tardives — parfois entretenues par les défenseurs d'Ibn ʿArabī — ce dernier ne semble pas avoir été victime de persécutions de son vivant (l'histoire selon laquelle il aurait été menacé de mort en Egypte est dépourvue de toute crédibilité) et il a bénéficié de l'amitié et du

¹⁴ Il me faut toutefois préciser que je laisse délibérément de côté, comme relevant d'une toute autre analyse, un type de débat qui concerne aussi la doctrine akbarienne: celui qui oppose, à l'intérieur du soufisme, partisans de la *waḥdat al-wujūd* et partisans de la *waḥdat al-shuhūd*. En dépit des efforts de certains auteurs indiens [et, par exemple, tout récemment, de Muḥammad Abdul Haq Ansari dans *Sufism and Shariʿah* (Londres 1986)] pour faire d'Aḥmad Sirhindī un successeur d'Ibn Taymiyya, je pense avec Y. Friedmann, *Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī* (Montreal/Londres 1971) et avec J. G. J. Ter Haar, *Volgeling en erfgenaam van de profeet* (Leyde 1989) que le *Mujaddid*, s'il critique Ibn ʿArabī, ne peut être considéré comme un adversaire du Shaykh al-akbar. Il avance d'ailleurs des thèses qui ne sont pas moins "hérétiques". Il est vrai, néanmoins, que al-Sakhāwī (*al-Qawl al-munbī*, ms. Berlin 2849, Spr. 790, ff. 84b-85) enrégimente Simnānī dans la liste des témoins à charge. Mais al-Sakhāwī fait feu de tout bois.

patronage de *fuqahā*¹⁵ éminents. Les premières réactions hostiles à son sujet résultent de la diffusion progressive, après sa mort, de certains de ses écrits demeurés jusque là confinés dans le cercle de ses élèves et en particulier des *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* qui, de manière relativement concise, énonçaient plus explicitement que d'autres ouvrages quelques uns des thèmes les plus provocants de l'enseignement akbarien. Les effets de cette diffusion furent de toute évidence aggravés par la présentation systématique et la formalisation dans un langage marqué par la *falsafa* que donnèrent de ces thèmes les commentaires de l'œuvre d'Ibn ʿArabī — et surtout des *Fuṣūṣ* — dûs aux disciples directs ou indirects: Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (ob. 1274), al-Jandī (ob. 1301), al-Qāshānī (ob. 1329). Al-Dhahabī déclare expressément que c'est à la fin du septième siècle de l'hégire, lorsque les *Fuṣūṣ* commencèrent à circuler parmi les ulama, qu'Ibn ʿArabī fut démasqué.¹⁶ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, dans le *Lisān al-mīzān*,¹⁷ constate de même qu'Ibn ʿArabī fut jugé favorablement par ses contemporains et y voit la preuve qu'ils ignoraient "ce qu'a rendu évident son livre des *Fuṣūṣ*". Le *faqīh* malikite ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Suʿūdī (ob. 1335) confirme — selon une version imprimée d'une de ses fatwas — cette datation.¹⁸

Le combat contre l'"hérésie akbarienne" ne s'engage véritablement, en tout cas, qu'au début du huitième/treizième siècle et c'est Ibn

¹⁵ Je renvoie sur ces points à Claude Addas, *Ibn ʿArabī ou la quête du Soufre rouge* (Paris 1989) 230-232 et chapitre x; *Quest for the Red Sulphur* (Cambridge 1993) 191-192 et 245s.

¹⁶ al-Sakhāwī, op. cit., f. 102.

¹⁷ *Lisān al-mīzān* (Hayderabad 1329 h.) v, 312-315. Ibn Ḥajar pratiquait-il la *taqīyya* en ces matières ? Je n'oserais l'affirmer mais il est en tout cas curieux de constater que son nom figure dans une chaîne de transmission (remontant à Ṣadr al-dīn al-Qūnawī) de la *rivāya* des oeuvres d'Ibn ʿArabī [voir la thèse de B. Aladdin, *ʿAbdalḡanī an-Nābulusī, oeuvre, vie, doctrine* (Paris I 1985)] ii, 153). Il conserva d'autre part tout au long de sa vie des relations amicales avec le Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ḥanafī (orphelins tous deux, ils s'étaient connus dès l'enfance) dont les audaces de langage auraient pu l'inquiéter; ʿAlī al-Batanūnī, *al-Sirr al-ṣafī* (Le Caire 1306 h.) i 7. Sur Ibn Ḥajar, voir également infra, note 92.

¹⁸ Le texte de cette fatwa se trouve inclus dans le recueil signalé note 1. Le passage cité figure p. 76. (Toutefois, dans le ms. de Berlin de al-Sakhāwī, op. cit., f. 74b, la notice sur al-Suʿūdī, qui reproduit cette phrase, mentionne le sixième et non le septième siècle de l'hégire) Voir aussi le propos de Kamāl al-dīn al-Marāghī rapporté par Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil waʾl-masāʾil*, ed. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (Le Caire s.d.) iv, 75-76, selon lequel ce sont les commentaires oraux de ʿAfīf al-dīn al-Tilimsānī (ob. 1291) sur les *Fuṣūṣ* qui lui ont ouvert les yeux.

Taymiyya qui ouvrira les hostilités. Le docteur ḥanbalite a certes des précurseurs, tel ce Quṭb al-Dīn al-Qaṣṭallānī (ob. 1287) — fils et neveu, pourtant, de personnages avec lesquels l'auteur des *Fuṣūṣ* fut très lié¹⁹ — dont les invectives contre al-Ḥallāj, Ibn ʿArabī et surtout Ibn Sabʿīn nous sont connues à travers les citations qu'en donnent, outre Ibn Taymiyya lui-même, différents auteurs plus tardifs.²⁰ Mais il ne s'agit encore que de guérillas dispersées. C'est avec Ibn Taymiyya que se fait jour une stratégie cohérente à défaut d'être efficace: elle vaudra en effet à celui qui la met en œuvre des infortunes successives dont la chronique est trop connue pour que je l'évoque ici et n'empêchera pas les thèses qu'il dénonce de se répandre. Mais elle prépare déjà d'autres assauts.

Ibn ʿArabī et ses disciples sont à maintes reprises mentionnés dans les trente-sept volumes de l'édition saoudienne des fatwas du *shaykh al-islām*. Ces écrits de circonstances sont toutefois extrêmement répétitifs. Dans cette copieuse production, je retiendrai donc principalement trois textes qui sont les plus significatifs et les plus complets: la lettre au shaykh al-Manbijī, qui paraît être le premier exposé systématique de la position d'Ibn Taymiyya,²¹ et les deux traités publiés sous les titres d'*Ibṭāl waḥdat al-wujūd*²² et de *Ḥaqīqat madhhab al-ittiḥādiyyīn*.²³ Ce dernier, qui est le plus long, est une réponse d'Ibn Taymiyya à un disciple qui n'a pu entendre jusqu'au bout les explications orales de son maître. Le ton en est plus abrupt que celui de la lettre à al-Manbijī, qui s'adressait à un partisan d'Ibn ʿArabī. Mais, surtout, le catalogue des hérésies y est plus complet, la documentation plus abondante. Cette différence ne s'explique sans doute pas seulement par celle des destinataires mais aussi, me semble-t-il, par une meilleure connaissance du dossier: tout au long de son combat solitaire contre la conjuration des impies, Ibn Taymiyya poursuit son enquête, accumule les pièces à conviction.

¹⁹ Sur le père de Quṭb al-dīn, Abū'l-ʿAbbās, voir *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, (Būlāq 1329 h.) i, 391-392; iv, 474.

²⁰ al-Sakhāwī, *al-Qawl al-munbī*, f. 44, fait référence à deux de ses ouvrages, le *Kitāb al-irtibāʾ* et la *Nuṣṣa ṣarīḥa* dont je ne connais pas de mss. identifiés.

²¹ *Majmūʿ fatāwā shaykh al-islām Ibn Taymiyya* (=MF) (al-Riyāḍ 1340-1382 h.) ii, 452-479; *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil wa'l-masāʾil* (=MRM), éd. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (Le Caire s.d.) i, 161-183.

²² MF ii, 286-361; MRM iii, 61-120.

²³ MF ii, 134-285; MRM iv, 1-102. Les références à ces trois textes seront ci-après à l'édition Rashīd Riḍā, plus accessible et moins encombrante.

Une remarque s'impose néanmoins: dans la lettre à al-Manbijī, il convient qu'ayant lu d'abord les *Futūḥāt Makkiyya* il avait retiré de cette lecture une impression plutôt favorable. Il précise même que les modalités du *sulūk*, telles que les prescrit Ibn ʿArabī, sont conformes à la tradition.²⁴ Or il ne s'agit pas là d'une simple concession à un soufi influent. Dans la *Haqīqa*, où il n'a aucune raison d'user de prudence, Ibn Taymiyya déclare que, bien que cette doctrine (celle d'Ibn ʿArabī et de ceux qui le suivent) soit du *kufr*, Ibn ʿArabī est, parmi eux, le plus proche de l'islam et qu'on trouve dans son œuvre d'excellents propos.²⁵ Les caudataires tardifs d'Ibn Taymiyya seront, on ne s'en étonnera pas, insensibles à ces nuances. Leur information sera d'ailleurs souvent moins étendue que celle du polémiste hanbalite: outre les *Futūḥāt* et, bien sûr, les *Fuṣūṣ*, Ibn Taymiyya mentionne également la *Durra fākhira*,²⁶ le *ʿAnqā mughrib*, le *Kunh mā lā budda li'l-murīd minhu* et le *Amr al-muḥkam*.²⁷

Sans doute exagère-t-il quelque peu en affirmant que l'ignorance des *ittiḥādiyyūn* de son époque est telle que "lorsque j'expliquai à certains de ces gens et à leurs chefs la signification réelle de ce qu'ils professent et le secret de leurs opinions, ils se mirent à faire grand cas de cela au point que, si je n'avais accompagné mes paroles d'un blâme et d'une réfutation, ils m'auraient considéré comme un de leurs *imāms*".²⁸ Mais on ne peut nier son souci persévérant de connaître — sinon de comprendre — les œuvres qu'il censure.

Les citations textuelles d'Ibn ʿArabī qu'on trouve dans les trois opuscules que je considère ici sont cependant empruntées pour la plupart aux *Fuṣūṣ* et surtout au prologue et aux chapitres 2, 3 et 4 de cet ouvrage.²⁹ Mais Ibn Taymiyya fait aussi très largement appel, il faut le noter, à des citations d'autres *ittiḥādiyyūn*: Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī, Ibn Sabʿīn, Ibn Isrāʾīl, ʿAfīf al-Dīn al-Tilimsānī, Awḥad al-Dīn al-Balyānī: c'est à un *madhhab* qu'il s'attaque, à une école

²⁴ *MRM* i, 171. Ibn Taymiyya semble même avoir consulté, sinon un manuscrit autographe des *Futūḥāt*, du moins un manuscrit révisé par Ibn ʿArabī.

²⁵ *MRM* iv, 6.

²⁶ *MRM* i, 171.

²⁷ *MF* iv, 18.

²⁸ *MRM* iv, 4.

²⁹ Mentionnons, à titre d'exemples: *MRM* iv, 42-43, référence au chapitre 3 (Nūḥ), suivi d'une longue citation; 46, citation du chapitre 9 (Yūsūf); 46-50, longue citation du chapitre 2 (Shīth); 58, citation du chapitre 14 (ʿUzayr); 63, nouvelle citation du chapitre 2; 79, citation du chapitre 3 (Nūḥ); 80 f., très longue citation du chapitre 24 (Hārūn). Des *Futūḥāt* sont surtout cités quelques vers (*MRM* I, 62 et 81, 112)

où les épigones sont plus coupables et plus dangereux que le fondateur. Il s'ensuit que, malgré le souci plusieurs fois exprimé d'innocenter Ibn ʿArabī de certaines des abominations professées par ses successeurs, Ibn Taymiyya tend à globaliser ses critiques et opère donc *de facto* un amalgame. Seul un lecteur ayant une connaissance directe et solide de l'œuvre du Shaykh al-akbar pourra garder présentes à l'esprit les distinctions qui s'imposent. Cette connaissance faisant presque toujours défaut à ceux qui prétendent aujourd'hui revêtir le manteau d'Ibn Taymiyya, il n'est guère surprenant de les voir imputer au Shaykh al-akbar des idées qui ne sont aucunement les siennes. C'est ainsi qu'Ibn ʿArabī sera fréquemment par la suite accusé de considérer comme licites les rapports sexuels d'un homme avec sa mère ou sa soeur. Or, chez Ibn Taymiyya cette opinion évidemment scandaleuse n'est pas attribuée à Ibn ʿArabī mais (tout aussi injustement d'ailleurs: on reconnaît là un des *topoi* favoris des chasseurs d'hérésie) à Ibn Sabʿīn et à al-Tilimsānī.³⁰

On peut regrouper les thèses condamnées sous quatre têtes de chapitres.³¹ En premier lieu vient, on ne s'en étonnera pas, la doctrine de la *waḥdat al-wujūd*,³² mère de toutes les erreurs, et qui, selon Ibn Taymiyya, consiste à croire que l'être de Dieu est l'être même "des djinns, des démons, des infidèles, des prévaricateurs, des chiens et des porcs".³³ Ceux qui professent cette croyance impie protestent d'ailleurs, note à juste titre Ibn Taymiyya, contre l'accusation de *ḥulūl* ("inhérence") et refusent la dénomination d'*ittiḥādiyyūn*, ces deux termes impliquant une dualité (*tathniya*) que leur doctrine exclut. A la critique de l'"unicité de l'Être" se rattache directement celle de l'interprétation blasphématoire par Ibn ʿArabī du *ḥadīth qudsī* selon lequel Dieu aime le serviteur qui s'est "approché de Lui" par l'accomplissement des actes surérogatoires (*nawāfil*) et obligatoires (*farāʾiḍ*) et devient alors "son ouïe par

³⁰ *Bughyat al-murtadd*, MF iii, 1326-1329.

³¹ Pour une analyse beaucoup plus détaillée que celle, très sommaire, que je propose ici voir Cyrille Chodkiewicz, *Les premières polémiques autour d'Ibn ʿArabī: Ibn Taymiyya* (Thèse de 3ème cycle dactylographiée, Paris iv 1984).

³² L'expression *waḥdat al-wujūd*, qui est devenue en quelque sorte le nom de code de la métaphysique akbarienne, ne se trouve pas chez Ibn ʿArabī. Elle apparaît furtivement chez al-Qūnawī et ne commence à revêtir un sens technique que chez al-Farghānī. Elle devra sa fortune au moins autant aux adversaires qu'aux partisans du Shaykh al-akbar.

³³ *MRM* iv, 5.

laquelle il entend, son pied par lequel il marche, sa main par laquelle il saisit...” Pour Ibn ‘Arabī, ce *ḥadīth* implique l’identification totale de Dieu et du ‘*abd* — ou plutôt l’actualisation par le ‘*abd* d’une identité qui n’a pas à advenir car elle n’a jamais cessé d’être même si la créature n’en avait pas conscience.³⁴

La deuxième thèse visée est celle de la *waḥdat al-adyān*, expression qui n’appartient pas au vocabulaire du Shaykh al-akbar. Ibn ‘Arabī et ses disciples sont accusés de ne faire aucune différence entre le *shirk* et l’*īmān* au point que “chez eux, le *shayṭān* lui-même est considéré comme un lieu théophanique (*majlā ilāhī*) qu’il faut donc honorer: et [selon eux] celui qui l’adore n’adore que Dieu”.³⁵ Cette présentation — évidemment caricaturale — de textes akbariens — et plus spécialement du chapitre 3 des *Fuṣūṣ*, celui consacré à Noé — qui semblent mettre sur le même plan la vraie foi et les pires idolâtries ne peut bien sûr qu’horrifier le commun des croyants. La troisième thèse, d’ailleurs logiquement liée à la précédente, est celle — indubitablement présente chez Ibn ‘Arabī — de la non-éternité du châtement des damnés lesquels, sans quitter le séjour infernal, seront néanmoins, eux aussi, enveloppés par “la Miséricorde qui embrasse toute chose” (Cor. 7/156): cette forme islamique de la doctrine de l’apocatastase est récusée de façon particulièrement violente comme propre à écarter toute crainte du jugement de Dieu et donc à encourager les pires turpitudes.³⁶ Un cas particulier qu’on peut inclure sous cette tête de chapitre donne lieu, chez Ibn Taymiyya, à de fréquents développements et son importance sera même souvent hypertrophiée par les auteurs ultérieurs au point d’être l’unique sujet de certains écrits polémiques: je veux parler du statut posthume de Fir‘awn, qu’Ibn ‘Arabī déclare sauvé par l’acte de foi qu’il énonce au moment où la mer l’engloutit. Ni musulman, ni juif, ni chrétien

³⁴ *MRM* iii, 113; iv, 17. Sur l’interprétation de ce *ḥadīth* par Ibn ‘Arabī, voir par exemple *Futūḥāt* iv, 24 et 449; *Fuṣūṣ* i, 81.

³⁵ *MRM* iv, 85. Sur cet aspect de la doctrine akbarienne voir par exemple, outre le chapitre 3 des *Fuṣūṣ*, *Futūḥāt* iv, 400s.; 449. L’idée selon laquelle Dieu est *al-ma‘būd fī kull ma‘būd* n’est évidemment pas chez Ibn ‘Arabī une invitation à adorer les idoles ou le diable. Son appui scripturaire est le verset 17/23 dont l’interprétation, on va le voir, est un élément majeur de la polémique.

³⁶ *MRM* iv, 74. La formulation chrétienne de l’apocatastase — condamnée par le magistère (Canon 9 du Concile de Constantinople en 453) — apparaît chez Origène. On la trouve aussi, entre autres auteurs, chez Grégoire de Nazianze, Grégoire de Nysse, Scot Erigène. De nos jours la doctrine de l’apocatastase a été avancée — comme “hypothèse” et non comme “thèse” — par le théologien Urs von Balthasar.

n'avait jamais osé proférer une erreur aussi scandaleuse, déclare Ibn Taymiyya.³⁷

La quatrième cible du docteur hanbalite est l'hagiologie akbarienne avec toutes les notions qui lui sont liées: celle de *ḥaqīqa muḥammadiyya* et celle de "Sceau de la sainteté" en particulier (pour laquelle la principale pièce à conviction est le chapitre 2 des *Fuṣūṣ*, celui consacré à Shīth).³⁸ L'identification de la "Réalité muhammadienne" au *qalam* ou au *ʿaql awwal* est rejetée avec force comme l'est aussi la thèse prêtée (à tort) à Ibn ʿArabī selon laquelle le *walī* serait supérieur au *nabī*. Quant au *khatm al-walāya* — terme dont Ibn Taymiyya attribue correctement le premier emploi à al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī — c'est une invention exorbitante qui ne peut se prévaloir d'aucun appui scripturaire et attente à la dignité du Prophète.

On pourrait certes allonger cette liste de "propositions condamnables" en y incluant des critiques portant sur diverses formulations qu'Ibn Taymiyya juge erronées ou scandaleuses. Mais si l'on s'en tient aux attaques visant Ibn ʿArabī lui-même, en excluant donc celles qui visent ses disciples, on constate qu'elles peuvent être regroupées sous l'un ou l'autre des quatre chefs d'accusation mentionnés ci-dessus. Reste par conséquent à s'interroger sur les procédés mis en œuvre par Ibn Taymiyya dans cette entreprise polémique dont je ne soulignerai jamais assez le caractère fondateur. Nul ne saurait contester l'habileté dialectique du *shaykh al-islām* et l'éclat de son talent. J'ai déjà dit, d'autre part, qu'il s'appuyait sur une documentation étendue et de première main. S'il me paraît évident que sa lecture d'Ibn ʿArabī comporte de graves contresens (que dénonceront les défenseurs de l'auteur des *Fuṣūṣ*), il n'en est pas moins vrai qu'elle n'est pas superficielle. Quand il fait le procès de la *wahdat al-wujūd*, il se borne parfois à en appeler ironiquement au simple bon-sens. C'est ainsi qu'il raconte qu'un *shaykh* appartenant au *madhhab* honni déclara un jour: "Si

³⁷ *MRM* iv, 91-92 et 98-101. Sur ce problème voir D. Gril, 'Le personnage coranique de Pharaon d'après l'interprétation d'Ibn ʿArabī', *Annales islamologiques* xiv (1978) 37-57 et Carl W. Ernst, 'Controversies over Ibn al-ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ*: the faith of Pharaoh', *Islamic Culture* cix (1985) 259-266.

³⁸ *MRM* iv, 48-50 et 58-70; la critique de l'hagiologie d'Ibn ʿArabī est longuement développée dans *al-Farq bayn awliyāʾ al-Raḥmān wa-awliyāʾ al-shayṭān*, *MF* xi, 156-310. Sur la doctrine d'Ibn ʿArabī en cette matière, voir M. Chodkiewicz, *Le Sceau des saints* (Paris 1986); id., *Seal of the Saints*, (Cambridge 1993).

quelqu'un prétend qu'il y a dans l'existence autre chose que Dieu, il ment !" A quoi quelqu'un objecta: "mais alors *qui* ment?" Confondu, le *shaykh* ne sut que répondre.³⁹ Mais Ibn Taymiyya ne se contente pas de ces arguments faciles et analyse par exemple avec attention la notion de *'ayn thābita* dont il voit bien qu'elle est fondamentale dans la métaphysique d'Ibn 'Arabī. Il ne peut évidemment s'accommoder de l'exemplarisme akbarien qui, à ses yeux, réifie les objets de la science divine en leur conférant le *thubūt*, la permanence, l'immutabilité: il voit aussitôt poindre là la croyance impie en l'éternité du monde. On observe d'ailleurs, sur ce point précis, les limites de sa capacité d'analyse: pour Ibn 'Arabī, les *a'yān thābita* sont effectivement éternelles. Mais elles sont éternelles *en Dieu*. Elles ne sont donc pas "le monde" car — pour reprendre la formule d'Alain de Lille — "tout ce qui est en Dieu est Dieu". Mais Ibn Taymiyya perçoit clairement, d'autre part, ce qui sépare l'école d'Ibn 'Arabī, pour laquelle l'univers est le déploiement des théophanies (*tajalliyāt*), de la *waḥda muṭlaqa* d'Ibn Sab'īn ou de al-Balyānī⁴⁰ même si, dans le feu de la polémique, l'anathème confond finalement les uns et les autres.

Les arguments linguistiques tiennent une grande place: l'expression coranique *āl Fir'awn* (Cor. 40/45), selon Ibn 'Arabī, désigne les "gens de Pharaon" à l'exclusion de ce dernier. Ibn Taymiyya entend, lui, démontrer que cette interprétation n'est pas conforme au bon usage de la langue arabe.⁴¹ Autre querelle de vocabulaire particulièrement vive, car elle porte sur l'appui scripturaire de ce qu'Ibn Taymiyya appelle *waḥdat al-adyān*, celle qui concerne le verbe *qaḍā* dans le verset 17/23 (*wa qaḍā rabbuka an lā ta'budū illā iyyāhu*): s'agit-il d'un *décret* (imprescriptible) ou d'un *commandement* (auquel on peut désobéir)?⁴² Ibn Taymiyya s'applique aussi à démontrer l'inauthenticité de *ḥadīth*-s souvent cités par Ibn 'Arabī comme celui qu'il emploie pour légitimer la notion de *ḥaqīqa muḥammadiyya*: "J'étais prophète alors qu'Adam

39 *MRM* iii, 76.

40 Voir *MRM* iv, 5-17. La distinction entre *aṣḥāb al-tajallī* et *aṣḥāb al-waḥda al-muṭlaqa* sera très clairement marquée aussi chez Lisān al-dīn Ibn al-Khaṭīb et chez Ibn Khaldūn. Sur ce point, voir notre introduction à la traduction de *L'Épître sur l'Unité absolue* de al-Balyānī (Paris 1986), souvent attribuée à tort à Ibn 'Arabī.

41 *MRM* iv, 99 (Cf. *Futūḥāt* ii, 277).

42 *MRM* i, 79, 89, 173.

était encore entre l'eau et la boue".⁴³ Mais les armes le plus fréquemment utilisées relèvent de l'exégèse et opposent le sens obvie des versets ou des *ḥadīths* aux interprétations qu'en donne le Shaykh al-akbar,⁴⁴ constamment accusé de *tabdīl* ou de *tahrīf* de la Parole divine au point qu'il est "pire que Musaylima".⁴⁵ Si les disciples sont plus hérétiques que leur maître — al-Qūnawī, entre autres, est "le plus impie et le plus dépourvu de science et de foi"⁴⁶ — il n'en reste pas moins qu'Ibn ʿArabī cumule — cette liste n'est pas limitative — les erreurs des *jahmiyya*, des qarmates, des *falāsifa*, des *muʿtazila* et que les chrétiens eux-mêmes sont moins égarés que lui.

Ḥusayn b. al-Ahdal, qadi d'Abyāt Ḥusayn — où a eu lieu, dit-il, l'enterrement d'ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jilī⁴⁷ — meurt lui-même en 1451, au moment où va prendre fin le règne de la dynastie rasūlide sur le Yémen.⁴⁸ De même que la campagne menée par Ibn Taymiyya contre Ibn ʿArabī est explicitement en relation avec le péril mongol et constitue un appel urgent aux dirigeants, trop complaisants pour l'hérésie, d'une *umma* affaiblie, l'œuvre polémique d'al-Ahdal s'inscrit, elle aussi, dans un contexte politique qui en explique la violence. Au Yémen, les souverains rasūlides, d'une manière

⁴³ *MRM* i, 8 et 70 (Cf. *Futūḥāt* i, 243; iii, 22, 141, etc.). Autre exemple intéressant, celui du *ḥadīth* "*zidnī fika taḥayyuran*" fondement de la doctrine akbarienne de la *ḥayra* (qu'on peut assimiler à l'*epektasis* de Grégoire de Nysse). Voir *MRM* iv, 45 (Cf. *Futūḥāt* i, 270, 420; ii, 137, 607, 661; iii, 490, etc.).

⁴⁴ Voir notamment la critique de l'interprétation par Ibn ʿArabī du verset 8/17 (*wa-mā ramayta...*), *MRM* iii, 95 f. (Cf. *Fuṣūṣ*, ed. ʿAfīfī, 185; *Futūḥāt* iv, 41, 280....) et du *ḥadīth qudsī* célèbre *marīḍtu fa-lam taʿudnī...*, *MRM* i, 169 (Cf. *Futūḥāt* i, 407; iii, 304 ; iv, 451). Je souligne que le sens obvie n'est pas nécessairement le sens littéral (auquel l'herméneutique d'Ibn ʿArabī est très fermement attachée. Voir à ce sujet notre *Un océan sans rivage*, chap. 1).

⁴⁵ *MRM* iv, 44-45.

⁴⁶ *MRM* iv, 18.

⁴⁷ al-Ahdal, *Kashf al-ghīṭāʾ ʿan ḥaqāʾiq al-tawḥīd*, ed. A. Bakir (Tunis 1964). Sur la mort de al-Jilī, voir p. 214. Un manuscrit inédit d'al-Ahdal mentionné (p. 131) par l'historien yéménite contemporain Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī dans son ouvrage *al-Ṣūfiyya wa'l-fuqahā f'l-Yaman* (Sanʿāʾ 1976) conduirait à situer la mort de al-Jilī vers 826/1423. Mais, selon une indication donnée par le fils de al-Jilī à la fin d'un manuscrit de *l'Insān kāmil* que cite le copiste du ms India Office 459 B (f. 295b) du *Ghunya arbāb al-samāʿ* la mort de al-Jilī serait à dater de Jumādā II 811/novembre 1408. Selon la même source al-Jilī serait né en Inde, à Calicut.

⁴⁸ Sur l'histoire des sultans rasūlides, voir *A Chronicle of the Rasūlid Dynasty*, édité par Hikoichi Yajima (Tokyo 1976) d'après un manuscrit anonyme de la Bibliothèque Nationale.

générale, témoignent — par calcul ou par conviction — une bienveillance excessive pour les soufis — y compris ceux qui, venus d'autres contrées, trouvent un refuge au Yémen en cette époque troublée et y importent des doctrines suspectes.⁴⁹ L'un d'eux, surtout, est mis en cause par al-Ahdal pour son patronage systématique des soufis akbariens: il s'agit du sultan al-Nāṣir, qui régna de 1400 à 1424 et dont nous savons, par un témoignage contemporain, qu'il détenait dans sa bibliothèque de nombreuses œuvres d'Ibn ʿArabī, parmi lesquelles un exemplaire des *Futūḥāt Makkiyya* sur certaines parties duquel figurait l'écriture de l'auteur.⁵⁰ Al-Ahdal déplore amèrement la protection qu'al-Nāṣir et son père al-Ashraf ont accordée à un personnage qu'il exècre, Abū l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad Ibn al-Raddād, ami de al-Jīlī et, comme lui, disciple du shaykh al-Jabartī.⁵¹ Il ne cache pas le soulagement que lui ont apporté les morts d'al-Raddād (en 1418) puis d'al-Nāṣir quelques années plus tard: délivrés de cette longue *miḥna*, les *fuqahāʾ* prennent enfin leur revanche sous les sultans al-Manṣūr ʿAbd Allāh (1424-1427) et Zāhir Yaḥyā (1428-1439).⁵²

A quel moment la doctrine d'Ibn ʿArabī a-t-elle été introduite au Yémen et par qui? Selon certains, on en trouverait déjà des traces dans les ouvrages attribués à Abū l-Ghayth Ibn Jamīl, mort en 1253, soit treize ans après le Shaykh al-akbar. Telle n'est pas l'opinion d'al-Ahdal, qui conteste l'authenticité des textes imputés à Ibn Jamīl.⁵³ Les coupables qu'il dénonce — et dont le rôle paraît en effet historiquement certain — dans le passage où il évoque ce problème sont surtout ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Maqdisī (ob. 688h.) et Raḍī al-Dīn Abū Bakr al-Yaḥyawī (ob. 709 h.).⁵⁴ Ce qui est tout à fait sûr, d'autre part, c'est que l'importance reconnue par al-Ahdal au shaykh Ismāʿīl al-Jabartī comme diffuseur de l'enseignement d'Ibn ʿArabī est pleinement justifiée. Outre les indications qu'on relève à

⁴⁹ Sur les rapports entre les sultans rasūlides et les soufis, voir al-Ḥibshī, op. cit. 45-50.

⁵⁰ Voir al-Ḥibshī, op. cit. 81 qui s'appuie sur une citation de al-Mizjāji (ob. 1425-1426). Voir aussi al-Qārī al-Baghdādī, *Manāqib Ibn ʿArabī* (Beyrouth 1959) 64.

⁵¹ *Kashf* 217-218. Sur nombre des personnages qui interviennent dans cette longue controverse, voir Aḥmad al-Sharjī (ob. 1488), *Ṭabaqāt al-khawāṣṣ* (Le Caire 1321 h.). (Sur al-Jabartī, 37-40 ; sur al-Raddād, 30-32).

⁵² *Kashf* 221-222.

⁵³ *Kashf* 220; voir al-Ḥibshī, op. cit. 69-82. Une notice biographique sur Abū l-Ghayth b. Jamīl figure chez al-Sharjī, op. cit. 187.

⁵⁴ *Kashf*, ibid. Sur al-Maqdisī, voir al-Sharjī, op. cit. 107.

ce sujet dans les écrits de al-Jilī, il est établi que al-Jabartī avait reçu une *ijāza ʿamma* des *Futūḥāt Makkiyya*.⁵⁵

Dans l'introduction de son *Kashf al-ghīṭāʾ*, al-Ahdal expose les motifs qui le conduisent à prendre la plume: l'ignorance abonde, les *fitan* se répandent. Il importe donc de mettre à nu les erreurs d'Ibn ʿArabī, de rappeler les fatwas qui le condamnent, de démasquer ces *hashwiyya*, *mujassima*, *ḥulūliyya*, *ittiḥādiyyūn* que sont ses partisans. A maintes reprises ces qualificatifs pris en bloc, ou d'autres semblables, seront généreusement appliqués aux disciples du Shaykh al-akbar. Mais plus de la moitié du livre est d'abord consacrée à un exposé, appuyé sur de nombreuses citations, de la théologie ashʿarite, seule orthodoxe aux yeux d'al-Ahdal. Les témoignages de al-Qushayrī, al-Suhrawardī, Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, al-Yāfiʿī sont, entre autres, invoqués pour établir que le soufisme authentique est en plein accord avec le *kalām* le plus sûr. Ce n'est qu'à la page 181, avec le chapitre trois, que commence la dénonciation en règle des *hashwiyya*, *falāsifa*, *bāṭiniyya*, *malāḥida*, *jabriyya* dont l'apparente dévotion abuse les croyants.

Bien qu'Ibn Taymiyya soit souvent mentionné⁵⁶ et que l'on retrouve dans le *Kashf* une liste de chefs d'accusation qui ne diffère guère de celle qu'a dressée le docteur ḥanbalite, il est clair qu'al-Ahdal ne s'est pas borné à démarquer le réquisitoire de son prédécesseur et qu'il a pris personnellement connaissance d'ouvrages d'Ibn ʿArabī. La critique de la *waḥdat al-adyān* s'appuie sur une phrase du chapitre 10 des *Fuṣūṣ*, puis fait référence à la *muqaddima* des *Futūḥāt*.⁵⁷ Suit celle de la croyance en l'éternité du monde, où l'auteur renvoie aux chapitres 2 et 73 des *Futūḥāt*. Viennent ensuite les attaques contre la *waḥdat al-wujūd*, la négation du châtement corporel des damnés et de son éternité, la notion de sceau de la sainteté, la "foi de Firʿawn", l'interprétation akbarienne du *ḥadīth*: *kuntu samʿahu*, la thèse selon laquelle "les amis de Dieu

⁵⁵ Il tenait cette *ijāza* du Shaykh Qāsim b. Muzaḥḥar b. Maḥmūd b. ʿAsākir. Nous devons cette information à D. Gril qui l'a relevée dans le ms. 1520 à Dār al-kutub. Une autre chaîne de transmission est donnée par B. Aladdin, op. cit. 153.

⁵⁶ Ces mentions sont plus nombreuses que ne le donne à penser un index très incomplet. Voir 105, 186, 199, 203, 212...

⁵⁷ La phrase des *Fuṣūṣ* ("Sois la *materia prima* de toutes les formes de croyance") figure p. 113 de l'édition ʿAfifi. Celle de la *muqaddima* des *Futūḥāt* est celle où Ibn ʿArabī déclare que la *ʿaqida* de l'"élite de l'élite" est volontairement dispersée dans l'ensemble de son livre (*Futūḥāt* i, 47). Al-Ahdal (227) le cite de nouveau.

sont cachés [dans le Coran] sous la forme de ses ennemis”, la notion de *‘ālam al-khayāl*: tout cela s’accompagnant d’abondantes références aux *Fuṣūṣ* (chapitres 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 24) mais aussi aux *Futūḥāt* (chapitres 2, 5, 559) et aux *Tanazzulāt mawṣiliyya* (que, sauf erreur, ne cite pas Ibn Taymiyya). Al-Ahdal se réfère également, à la fin du chapitre, aux œuvres de al-Qāshānī (en l’occurrence les *Ta’wīlāt*, qu’il n’attribue pas à Ibn ‘Arabī comme s’obstinent à le faire les éditeurs modernes), de al-Qayṣarī et à la *Ta’iyya* d’Ibn al-Fāriḍ.⁵⁸

Commence alors la reproduction d’une série de fatwas, dues à Badr al-Dīn Ibn Jamā’a, Ibn Taymiyya, Shams al-Dīn al-Jazarī, Nūr al-Dīn al-Bakrī, ‘Isā al-Zawāwī, Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī, toutes condamnant la doctrine d’Ibn ‘Arabī. Ce n’est là qu’un florilège: al-Ahdal nous informe en effet qu’il extrait ces *responsa* d’un recueil de près de deux cent fatwas qu’il a composé antérieurement.⁵⁹ Ce chiffre est peut-être une exagération mais il n’est pas invraisemblable: al-Sakhāwī, qui, malgré sa rage de collectionneur, ne peut tout recenser, enregistre quatre-vingt fatwas ou opinions défavorables à Ibn ‘Arabī entre la mort d’Ibn Taymiyya et celle d’al-Ahdal.

Le *Kashf al-ghīṭā’* aborde ensuite les données strictement yéménites de la controverse, mettant violemment en cause al-Jabartī, al-Jīlī et surtout al-Raddād mais, plus généralement, les soufis de Zabīd. Aux accusations proprement doctrinales, s’ajoutent celles visant les moeurs de ses adversaires (ils boivent du vin, pratiquent l’échangisme...). Les efforts des *fuqahā’* pour défendre la vraie foi et imposer l’observance de la sharia ont, hélas, été tenus en échec par la complaisance du souverain qui, même après la mort d’al-Raddād, a continué à leur imposer le silence et à prendre parti pour les *malāhīda*. L’accession au trône de sultans lucides et énergiques a permis enfin aux *fuqahā’* de redresser la tête — et à al-Ahdal de rédiger une seconde fatwa plus sévère que celle qu’il avait rédigée pendant la *miḥna*: il nous en donne le texte, qui confirme sa préoccupation — commune aux hérésiographes, toutes religions confondues — de ramener chacune des erreurs qu’il combat à un

⁵⁸ En raison de la brièveté de ce chapitre 3 (181-201) et de l’imbrication des thèmes qui y sont abordés, je ne crois pas nécessaire de renvoyer, pour chacun d’eux, à une page précise du *Kashf*.

⁵⁹ *Kashf* 213.

précédent historique (*hashwiyya*, qarmates...).⁶⁰ On constate en outre que, si la polémique a un caractère yéménite très marqué, al-Ahdal ne néglige pas de viser aussi des cibles plus lointaines comme les égyptiens Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh et Ibn Abī Maṣṣūr dont les œuvres, bien qu'elles ne soient pas à proprement parler akbariennes, témoignent d'une inclination pour les idées pernicieuses et la personne même d'Ibn ʿArabī.⁶¹ Mais il faut sans doute aussi voir là une manière de rappeler que ce sont des influences venues de l'étranger qui ont corrompu le soufisme yéménite — un type d'argument promis à un long succès, "l'étranger" ayant, bien sûr, une identité variable selon les époques (les persans, les turcs... — aujourd'hui l'improbable conjuration des sionistes, du Vatican et des loges maçonniques).

En définitive, on constate que, bien qu'al-Ahdal ait pris la peine de se reporter aux écrits d'Ibn ʿArabī, sa critique des idées akbariennes proprement dites est loin d'avoir la précision de celle d'Ibn Taymiyya: il se contente, en somme, de mettre en regard les thèses du *kalām* ashʿarite et celles d'Ibn ʿArabī — telles qu'il les comprend — l'autorité qu'il attribue aux premières suffisant, selon lui, à établir la fausseté des secondes. On retiendra surtout que, dans sa deuxième fatwa al-Ahdal, qui au fond se soucie moins d'Ibn ʿArabī que de ses disciples yéménites avec lesquels il a bien des comptes à régler, adopte une position qui m'a fait juger indulgente, par comparaison, celle du *mufṭī* turc mentionné au début de cette étude. Peut-on accepter le repentir des partisans de ce *kāfir* — qui, par là-même, sont eux aussi des *kuffār*? Al-Ahdal mentionne cinq attitudes possibles, plus ou moins rigoureuses, à l'égard de ce problème et conclut pour sa part au refus de la *tawba* — ce qui, légalement, prive en principe l'accusé de toute possibilité d'échapper à la peine capitale.

Comme al-Sakhāwī, l'auteur d'un livre de cinq cents pages de critique sur l'auteur des *Futūḥāt* et des *Fuṣūṣ*, que nous retrouverons bientôt (et qui le considère comme un carriériste prêt à tout pour qu'on le remarque) Ibrāhīm al-Biqāʿī (ob. 1480) est un élève d'Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī. Son caractère manifestement irascible est sans

⁶⁰ *Kashf* 225-228.

⁶¹ *Kashf* 273. L'accusation contre Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh vise les *Latāʾif al-minan*, où Ibn ʿArabī est mentionné à trois reprises. Celle concernant Ibn Abī Maṣṣūr renvoie au paragraphe 115 de sa *Risāla*, ed. Denis Gril (Le Caire 1986).

doute, au moins autant que ses convictions, responsable de l'obstination avec laquelle il jouera un rôle central dans un de ces épisodes paroxystiques qui, de loin en loin, font que le débat permanent mais feutré entre spécialistes éclate sur la place publique. Depuis Ibn Taymiyya, nombre d'auteurs avaient exprimé des positions hostiles à Ibn ʿArabī et, parmi eux, des personnages notoires: al-Dhahabī, Sirāj al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī, Ibn Khaldūn, Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī et son disciple ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Bukhārī, al-Ahdal... Al-Biqāʿī, on va le voir, n'ajoute rien à un argumentaire depuis longtemps figé et ses œuvres sont loin d'être les plus intéressantes dans le vaste corpus des écrits anti-akbariens. La critique de la *waḥdat al-wujūd* à laquelle se livre l'atrabilaire al-Bukhārī dans sa *Fāḍiḥat al-mulḥidīn*, sans être ni vraiment nouvelle ni très profonde, a au moins le mérite de présenter une certaine rigueur formelle — ce qui explique que, près de trois siècles plus tard, al-Nābulusī consacre encore plusieurs pages d'un de ses ouvrages à sa réfutation.⁶² Al-Bukhārī est d'ailleurs en 1428, sous le règne du sultan Barsbāy, à l'origine d'une crise qui préfigure celles (car il y en a plus d'une) que déclenchera al-Biqāʿī trente ans plus tard. Il s'agit, déjà, d'Ibn ʿArabī et d'Ibn al-Fāriḍ, souvent associés dans l'opprobre car les principaux commentateurs de la *Tāʾiyya* du second sont des disciples du premier: al-Farghānī, al-Qayṣarī, al-Aykī. Al-Bukhārī, lors d'une discussion entre *fuqahāʾ*, prononce le *takfīr* contre Ibn ʿArabī et exige la destitution du qadi Muḥammad al-Bisāṭī, lequel estime qu'une interprétation adéquate de leurs propos permet de justifier les partisans de la *waḥdat al-wujūd*. Al-Bisāṭī finira par céder et jettera lui aussi l'anathème sur Ibn ʿArabī. Mais al-Bukhārī, furieux de n'avoir pu obtenir sa destitution, quittera définitivement l'Égypte pour la Syrie... où il se livrera à des attaques dirigées, cette fois, contre Ibn Taymiyya et ses disciples ḥanbalites,⁶³ se brouillant ainsi avec ceux qui seraient ses alliés naturels: la Syrie de cette époque, plus provinciale que l'Égypte, est en général aussi plus réfractaire aux idées akbariennes, plus prompte à les condamner sous la plume de ses ulama. Le soufi marocain ʿAlī b. Maymūn al-Fāsī, lorsqu'il

⁶² Il s'agit d'*al-Wujūd al-ḥaqq*, dont l'édition critique a été établie par B. Aladdin (Damas 1995). Sur la relation entre cet ouvrage et la *Fāḍiḥa*, voir l'introduction de l'éditeur, chapitre 2.

⁶³ Sur cette affaire, voir l'introduction d'*al-Wujūd al-ḥaqq* 14-15 ; Th. Emil Homerin, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint* (University of South Carolina Press 1994) 59-60; Eric Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie* (Damas 1995) 5ème partie.

arrivera à Damas à la fin du quinzième siècle, découvrira que l'emplacement du tombeau d'Ibn 'Arabī n'est plus qu'un terrain vague⁶⁴ et il faudra, quelques années plus tard, une décision énergique de Salim 1er pour que soit construit le mausolée qu'on visite encore aujourd'hui.

Parmi les procureurs qui se succèdent dans le procès posthume d'Ibn 'Arabī, al-Biqā'ī, disons-le tout net, est un des plus médiocres. Il a en commun avec Ibn Taymiyya et al-Ahdal d'avoir choisi le mauvais moment: comme Ibn Taymiyya sous Baybars II, comme al-Ahdal sous al-Nāṣir, il n'a pas la chance d'écrire sous des règnes où les anti-akbariens ont pour eux cet appui des princes sans lequel leur cause n'a aucune chance de triompher. Comme eux, il va s'exposer à de sérieux désagréments. Le destin lui offrira une ironique revanche: vilipendé de son vivant, il prendra rang post-mortem parmi les autorités qu'invoqueront des polémistes plus tardifs... mais il devra aussi une notoriété paradoxale à l'un de ses plus sérieux adversaires. A son *Tanbīh al-ghabī ilā takfīr Ibn al-'Arabī* al-Suyūṭī, retournant le compliment à l'expéditeur, répliquera par un *Tanbīh al-ghabī fī tabrī'at Ibn al-'Arabī* qui contribuera à perpétuer le souvenir de al-Biqā'ī.⁶⁵

Ce dernier, en tout cas, va se signaler à l'attention à trois reprises au cours de sa vie agitée. En 1460, au Caire, c'est principalement à Ibn 'Arabī et subsidiairement à Ibn al-Fāriḍ qu'il s'en prend. Dix ans plus tard, en 1470, il entreprend une nouvelle campagne de dénonciation. Elle vise les mêmes auteurs mais, cette fois, c'est Ibn al-Fāriḍ qui est le plus directement mis en cause. L'affaire prend aussitôt de vastes proportions: les vers d'Ibn al-Fāriḍ sont plus répandus que les écrits d'Ibn 'Arabī, sa tombe est vénérée au Caire. Le sultan Qāyṭbāy demande au grand qadi Zakariyyā al-Anṣārī de trancher le débat. Al-Anṣārī a la réputation d'être un pieux juriste.

⁶⁴ 'Alī b. Maymūn, *Risāla fī'l-intiṣār li'l-shaykh Muḥyi'l-dīn* (= *Tanzīh al-ṣiddīq*), ms. Berlin 2851, we 1545, ff. 55-59b.

⁶⁵ La première édition du *Tanbīh al-ghabī* de al-Biqā'ī a été publiée au Caire en 1953, jointe à celle de son *Tahdhīr al-'ibād min ahl al-'inād*, sous le titre de *Maṣra' al-taṣawwuf*. La véhémence hystérique de l'introduction et des notes de l'éditeur ('Abd al-Raḥmān al-Wakīl) mérite le détour. Quant au *Tanbīh* de al-Suyūṭī, il en existe une édition publiée au Caire en 1990 par le Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ḥasan Maḥmūd (qui s'emploie — avec plus de pitié que d'acribie — à éditer des œuvres d'Ibn 'Arabī). Faut-il voir la malice d'un typographe gagné aux thèses wahhābites dans la faute d'impression qui, dans le titre, transforme *fī tabrī'at Ibn al-'Arabī* en *fī takhṭī'at Ibn al-'Arabī*?

Mais il n'est pas que cela: c'est un soufi et même, selon al-Sha^crānī qui fut son élève, un saint éminent.⁶⁶ Son nom apparaît dans plusieurs *silsilas*. Toutefois il a, dès sa jeunesse, choisi sur le conseil d'un *walī* le *tasattur bi'l-fiqh. Sanctus absconditus*, il cache les charismes dont il a été gratifié. Sa fonction, au demeurant, lui impose une certaine réserve. Il hésite à donner une fatwa sur le problème qui lui est soumis. Finalement, sur l'insistance du *kātib al-sirr*, Ibn Muzhir (qui était un défenseur d'Ibn al-Fāriḍ), al-Anṣārī acceptera de rendre une sentence, modérée dans ses termes mais qui exonère Ibn al-Fāriḍ des accusations portées contre lui. L'entêtement de al-Biqā^cī allait provoquer sa disgrâce: en 1473, c'était lui qui, à son tour, était dénoncé comme *kāfir* et devait quitter l'Égypte.⁶⁷ Réfugié en Syrie, il couronna sa carrière de polémiste en s'en prenant à al-Ghazālī.⁶⁸ Le résultat ne se fit pas attendre: "il s'en fallut de peu qu'il ne fût mis à mort et il dût se cacher dans sa maison sans pouvoir même se rendre à la prière du vendredi".⁶⁹

Si al-Ahdal se bornait — comme tant d'autres avant et après lui — à reprendre les chefs d'accusation que retenait déjà Ibn Taymiyya, du moins prenait-il la peine de se reporter lui-même aux sources, c'est à dire aux œuvres du Shaykh al-akbar, sans se limiter aux classiques passages-témoins des *Fuṣūṣ*. Al-Biqā^cī, lui, est un pamphlétaire paresseux. Sa tactique semble déduite de la remarque dédaigneuse que Saint Jérôme adressait aux pélagiens: *sententias vestras prodidisse superasse est*. Le *Tanbih al-ghabī* est en effet, pour une large part, constitué de longues citations d'Ibn ^cArabī, toutes tirées des *Fuṣūṣ*, dont il semble penser qu'elles suffiront à inspirer une pieuse horreur (le chapitre 3 des *Fuṣūṣ* est ainsi presque entièrement reproduit) et qu'il ne commente que de manière très expéditive.⁷⁰ Les thèmes sont ceux qu'on attendait: la *waḥdat al-*

⁶⁶ al-Sha^crānī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Le Caire 1954) ii, 122-124. Selon Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, al-Anṣārī fut même le *ṣāhib Miṣr*, le saint qui détenait l'autorité spirituelle sur l'Égypte toute entière, *al-Fatāwā al-ḥadithiyya* (Le Caire 1970) 50.

⁶⁷ Sur cet épisode voir E. Geoffroy, op. cit., 5ème partie; et Th. Homerin, op. cit. 63-75.

⁶⁸ Les attaques de al-Biqā^cī portaient sur la fameuse formule *laysa fi'l-inkān...* et prirent la forme d'un nouvel ouvrage le *Tahdīm al-arkān*. Sur cette querelle, voir Eric L. Ormsby, *Theodicy in Islamic Thought* (Princeton 1984) 135-160.

⁶⁹ al-Suyūṭī, *al-Taḥadduth bi-ni^cmat allāh*, dans E. M. Sertain, *Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī* (Cambridge 1975) ii 187; voir aussi i, 54-55.

⁷⁰ On trouve ainsi des citations de la *khuṭba* des *Fuṣūṣ* (p. 37), du chap. 3 (42 à 62), du chapitre 4 (62 à 73), du chapitre 7 (74-75), du chapitre 9 (p. 76), du chapitre 10 (88-103), des chapitres 15 et 16 (104-108), du chapitre 18 (p. 109), du chapitre 19 (p. 110), du chapitre 22

wujūd (qui consiste selon al-Biqāʿī à professer que Dieu est la somme des parties de l'univers), la *waḥdat al-adyān*, la foi de Firʿawn, l'apocatastase, la supériorité de la *ḥayra* sur le *ʿilm*, le *tahrīf al-qurʾān*. Seul de la liste habituelle est absent le problème du "Sceau de la sainteté".

Bien que diverses opinions hostiles à Ibn ʿArabī soient mentionnées dans la première partie de l'ouvrage, c'est dans la seconde⁷¹ que al-Biqāʿī les entasse dans le désordre, aucun critère chronologique ou thématique ne déterminant leur succession. On retrouve là Ibn Taymiyya, al-Dhahabī, Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī, al-Bukhārī (longuement cité), al-Ahdal, al-Bisāṭī, Ibn Khaldūn (avec un extrait de sa fatwa, dont il sera question plus loin, prescrivant l'autodafé des ouvrages d'Ibn ʿArabī), Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī... Un cas précis démontre que al-Biqāʿī ne s'embarrasse pas de scrupules: il cite un passage de la *Rawḍat al-taʿrīf* de Lisān al-Dīn Ibn al-Khaṭīb d'une manière qui fait apparaître ce dernier comme condamnant, lui aussi, les thèses akbariennes. Or il suffit de se référer à la *Rawḍa* pour constater que ce passage concerne Ibn Sabʿīn et ses disciples et que la section précédente, celle où Lisān al-Dīn parle d'Ibn ʿArabī et de ses fidèles, les décrit comme des *muḥibbūn*, *mustahlikūn* [*fī'llāh*] et, à propos de leurs doctrines, déclare: *hādhā'l-ra'y nabīl*.⁷²

L'éditeur du *Tanbīh* y a joint l'opuscule rédigé par al-Biqāʿī en 878/1473 sous le titre *Taḥdhīr al-ʿibād* et qui, cette fois, s'attaque plus particulièrement à Ibn al-Fārīd. Mais, pour une raison signalée plus haut, l'auteur de la *Khamriyya* et celui des *Futūḥāt* sont fréquemment considérés comme solidaires — certains supposent même qu'il y eut entre eux des relations personnelles qu'aucune donnée historique n'autorise à juger vraisemblables. Al-Biqāʿī va donc, lui aussi, les confondre dans l'anathème et, cette fois encore, utiliser des citations des *Fuṣūṣ*. Les autorités qu'il invoque sont les mêmes que dans le *Tanbīh*: Ibn Taymiyya, al-Dhahabī, al-Bulqīnī, Ibn Ḥajar, al-Ahdal... Mais, pas plus que l'ouvrage précédent, celui-

(111-115), du chapitre 23 (116-120), du chapitre 24 (120-126), du chapitre 25 (127-139), du chapitre 27 (140-149). Les citations d'Ibn ʿArabī sont entrecoupées, ici et là, de citations d'Ibn al-Fārīd.

⁷¹ De la page 149 à la page 206. Cette deuxième partie est suivie du *Taḥdhīr al-ʿibād* dont nous parlons infra.

⁷² *Tanbīh* 169-170. Cf. *Rawḍat al-taʿrīf* (Le Caire 1968) 582-601 (4ème "rameau"; le 5ème "rameau", celui où il est traité d'Ibn Sabʿīn, figure 602-612).

ci n'apporte de contribution véritablement personnelle au débat. De toute évidence, c'est à son activisme brouillon, plutôt qu'à l'intérêt de ses écrits que al-Biqā'ī doit de se signaler à l'attention de ses contemporains. Il connaîtra d'ailleurs un long purgatoire avant d'apparaître, beaucoup plus tard, comme un héros de la cause anti-akbarienne. C'est ce que rappelle, non sans malice, Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī (m. en 974/1567): al-Biqā'ī, dit-il, a été puni par Dieu de son attitude à l'égard du Shaykh al-akbar car personne ne lit plus ses ouvrages ni ceux des disciples qui, à son exemple, ont condamné Ibn ʿArabī ou Ibn al-Fāriḍ. Il aurait d'ailleurs reconnu, à la fin de sa vie, que seuls une quinzaine de passages des *Futūḥāt* lui paraissaient condamnables et que ce qu'enseigne Ibn ʿArabī sur les "secrets des *muʿāmalāt*" était plus beau que ce que l'on trouve chez al-Ghazālī sur le même sujet.⁷³

Mort en 1497, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Sakhāwī n'aura pas eu l'amertume d'assister à ce triomphe d'Ibn ʿArabī qui va suivre la conquête ottomane de la Syrie et de l'Égypte: dès 1517, Kamāl Pāshā Zādeh (m. 1534), futur *shaykh al-islām*, délivre une fatwa affirmant l'orthodoxie du Shaykh al-akbar.⁷⁴ Ibn Ṭūlūn (m. 1546), *imām* de la mosquée d'Ibn ʿArabī édifée par Salīm Ier, reproduit le texte de cette fatwa dans un ouvrage dont le titre — *al-Nuṭq al-munbī ʿan tarjamāt Ibn al-ʿArabī* — est une réplique à celui du livre d'al-Sakhāwī, *al-Qawl al-munbī*. La protection impériale ne fera certes pas taire toutes les critiques anti-akbariennes. Ḥājji Khalifa (m. 1657) évoque dans son *Mizān al-ḥaqq* ces querelles sans cesse renaissantes et qui l'exaspèrent.⁷⁵ Mais les accusateurs d'Ibn

⁷³ *al-Fatāwā al-ḥadīthiyya* 52-54. La remarque sur les "secrets des *muʿāmalāt*" se rapporte sans doute aux chapitres des *Futūḥāt* traitant des *ibādāt*. Défenseur d'Ibn ʿArabī (voir aussi, op. cit., 296, 335...), Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, s'il vise plusieurs des adversaires de ce dernier, souligne surtout le rôle d'Ibn Taymiyya, qu'il critique avec véhémence (114-117): c'est, dit-il, un innovateur (*mubtadiʿ*), un égaré qui égare les autres... On doit observer que l'œuvre d'Ibn Ḥajar (encore utilisée aujourd'hui, notamment en Turquie, dans des publications anti-wahhabites) n'est guère plus originale que celle de al-Biqā'ī: comme elle, mais en sens contraire, elle recourt avec profusion à l'argument d'autorité.

⁷⁴ Pour B. Aladdin (op. cit., introd. 63-64) Kamāl Pāshā Zādeh aurait contresigné cette fatwā sans en être proprement l'auteur. Il est en tout cas l'auteur d'une *Risāla fī waḥdat al-wujūd* (Berlin, ms. or. 4106, f. 110-113).

⁷⁵ Traduction anglaise par G.L. Lewis, *The Balance of Truth* (Londres 1957) (voir chap. ix et x). Soucieux, comme le suggère le titre de cet écrit, de s'en tenir à un juste milieu entre les parties opposées, Ḥājji Khalifa n'en prend pas moins, quoiqu'en termes modérés, une

ʿArabī, y compris en Syrie, trouvent généralement peu d'échos et s'exposent même parfois à une sévère répression.⁷⁶ Des auteurs de poids, tel al-Nābulusī (m. 1731) les contredisent sur la base d'une argumentation serrée et avec moins de précautions oratoires que celles dont s'entourait, naguère, un al-Suyūṭī.⁷⁷ Aux derniers jours de la dynastie, un Yūsuf al-Nabhānī (m. 1931) s'emploiera encore à maintes reprises, dans son abondante production, à la défense et à l'illustration du Shaykh al-akbar — mais, cette fois, pour répondre à des adversaires — wahhābites et salafīyya — plus résolu et plus dangereux que l'infortuné al-Biqāʿī.

Si le *Qawl al-munbī* n'est donc pas le chant du cygne de l'opposition à Ibn ʿArabī, il n'en marque pas moins la fin d'une époque et, d'une certaine manière, épuise le répertoire des arguments anti-akbariens. Quiconque a lu les cinq cents folios où le zèle policier d'al-Sakhāwī a consigné l'essentiel des condamnations antérieures peut se dispenser d'examiner la littérature polémique des siècles suivants: il n'y trouvera rien de nouveau. Frustré dans ses ambitions, jaloux en particulier de al-Suyūṭī qui fut son élève et qu'il critique avec aigreur dans son *Ḍawʿ al-lāmiʿ*,⁷⁸ al-Sakhāwī compile avec un même enthousiasme minutieux des fatwas respectables et d'infâmes calomnies (que, de nos jours, certaines brochures d'inspiration saoudienne reprennent avec complaisance). Sa méthode est simple: "J'ai rassemblé dans ce livre les paroles et les textes qui critiquent l'auteur des *Futūḥāt* et des *Fuṣūṣ* et je les ai disposés selon la date de décès de leurs auteurs" déclare-t-il en préambule.⁷⁹ Ainsi pourra-t-on constater "le consensus (*ijmāʿ*) des savants de tous les *madhāhib* et de toutes les disciplines". Cette déclaration d'intention est suivie d'une liste des principales sources écrites d'informations utilisées (mentionnées en ordre chronologique inverse: Manṣūr al-Kāzarūnī, mort en 860/1456 apparaît en premier, suivi d'al-Aḥdal, puis de ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Bukhārī..., le dernier nom cité, et donc le plus

position pro-akbarienne.

⁷⁶ Eric Geoffroy (op. cit., 2ème partie, chap. 2) rapporte le cas de Muḥammad al-Falūjī, condamné à mort à Alep en 1535 pour avoir accusé Ibn ʿArabī de professer une doctrine hérétique ainsi que celui du muftī Jawizādeh, révoqué pour une raison analogue en 1541.

⁷⁷ Outre le *Wujūd al-ḥaqq*, déjà mentionné, qui date de 1693, al-Nābulusī est l'auteur du *Īdāḥ al-maqṣūd min waḥdat al-wujūd* (Damas 1969), écrit en 1680 et d'un traité inédit, *al-Radd al-maʿīn ʿalā muntaqish al-ʿarīf Muḥyī'l-dīn*, rédigé en 1672 (ms. Zāhiriyya, 9872, ff. 1-67).

⁷⁸ Sur les rapports de al-Sakhāwī et de al-Suyūṭī, voir E.M. Sartain, op. cit. i, 72-77.

⁷⁹ Nous utilisons ici le ms. de Berlin 2849, Spr. 790, ff. 1-250.

ancien, étant celui de al-Qaṣṭallānī). Vient alors l'annonce d'une introduction divisée en huit sections, qui s'étendent du folio 3 au folio 43. La section 1 a pour objet d'établir l'illégitimité d'un *ta'wīl* qui viserait à découvrir une signification orthodoxe à des formulations dont le sens obvie est hétérodoxe. La section 2 est destinée à démontrer que les *Futūḥāt*, les *Fuṣūṣ* et tous les ouvrages du même genre ont été constamment condamnés et que leur saisie et leur destruction ont été prescrites par les ulama (la fameuse fatwa d'Ibn Khaldūn est mentionnée sur ce point). La section 3, démarquée d'al-Aḥdal, évoque les événements survenus au Yémen sous les Rasūlides. La section 4 analyse les diverses positions qu'ont adoptées les lecteurs d'Ibn ʿArabī et, notamment, les excuses que certains ont invoquées pour le défendre: les propos qui lui sont reprochés ne sont-ils pas des interpolations malveillantes? Ne donnait-il pas lui-même aux formules qu'on lui reproche un autre sens que celui qu'elles ont si on les prend à la lettre? Quelles qu'aient pu être ses erreurs, qui peut affirmer qu'il ne s'en est pas repenti avant de mourir? La cinquième section accompagne un choix de citations d'Ibn ʿArabī (dont le célèbre poème *laqad ṣāra qalbī*) d'une énumération des principaux chefs d'accusation: éternité du monde, supériorité du *walī* sur le *nabī*, *waḥdat al-wujūd*, etc. La section 6 passe en revue ses disciples et ses partisans: al-Qaysarī, al-Farghānī, al-Tilimsānī, al-Qāshānī, al-Jabartī, al-Raddād... La septième et la huitième section de cette *muqaddima* confuse et répétitive reviennent sur le problème examiné dans la première et la troisième. S'appuyant sur des autorités déjà invoquées précédemment (et qui le seront de nouveau abondamment par la suite) al-Sakhāwī, une fois de plus, exclut toute circonstance atténuante en faveur d'Ibn ʿArabī. On relèvera que, comme Ibn Taymiyya avant lui, il n'hésite pas à inscrire *in fine* Ibn Sabʿīn dans la liste des témoins à charge bien que ce dernier "soutienne des thèses réprouvées et professe des croyances corrompues".

A cette laborieuse introduction succède un long défilé d'environ cent-cinquante personnages. Le premier est Muḥammad b. Shaddād al-Ḥalabī (m. 684), suivi de Quṭb al-Dīn al-Qaṣṭallānī, mort deux ans après lui. L'ordre chronologique est rigoureusement respecté jusqu'au bout, année par année et, le cas échéant, mois par mois et nous amène à la fin du neuvième/quinzième siècle. La longueur des notices est, elle, très variable. Quelques lignes pour les uns (six pour al-Biqāʿī, que al-Sakhāwī détestait, guère plus pour chaque nom de la *turba magna* des auteurs les plus tardifs) mais une trentaine de

folios (ff. 53-68) pour Ibn Taymiyya ou pour ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Suʿūdī (ff. 69-84b), une dizaine pour Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (ff. 209-213) ou al-Ahdal (ff. 213-217). L'avantage de cette présentation est d'offrir au chercheur une vue panoramique sur un peu plus de deux siècles de polémiques. L'inconvénient réside dans le fait que la plupart des individus mentionnés font état des propos de leurs prédécesseurs qui, à leur tour... On a donc souvent affaire à des citations dans les citations dans les citations. Les mêmes phrases, d'abord apparues dans la notice consacrée à celui qui les a proférées, reviennent ainsi, *ad nauseam*, dans nombre de notices ultérieures. Les plus significatives ayant déjà fait leur apparition dans la *muqaddima*, la lecture de l'ouvrage se révèle assez fastidieuse. Tels propos du qadī ʿIzz al-Dīn b. ʿAbd al-Salām (dont il existe deux versions contradictoires)⁸⁰ ou d'Ibn Taymiyya (dont les écrits sont une référence obligée pour la plupart des critiques postérieurs) sont inlassablement répétés. Al-Sakhāwī, d'autre part, n'hésite guère à tirer dans son camp des soufis comme al-Yāfiʿī (f. 112b) dont la position vis-à-vis du Shaykh al-akbar est prudente (= ses écrits ne peuvent être mis entre toutes les mains) mais ne peut en aucun cas être considérée comme une condamnation de sa doctrine.⁸¹ Il classe résolument parmi les adversaires d'Ibn ʿArabī un personnage comme al-Fīrūzābādī (f. 163), auteur d'une fatwa bien connue, rédigée à la demande du sultan yéménite al-Nāṣir, et où l'auteur du *Qāmūs* justifie la possession par al-Nāṣir des œuvres du maître andalou, dont il fait l'éloge avec éloquence. Selon al-Sakhāwī, qui déclare tenir cette information d'Ibn Ḥajar, al-Fīrūzābādī aurait révisé son attitude avant de mourir. Cette affirmation reste fort sujette à caution. Le souci de faire nombre amène aussi al-Sakhāwī, par exemple, à inclure (f. 52b) un auteur — le *faqīh* ḥanbalite Mūsā al-Yūsī (m. 726) — lequel se borne à constater que “seule une petite partie de ses [= Ibn ʿArabī] écrits est compréhensible” mais que “ce que l'on peut comprendre et qui parvient à l'esprit [du lecteur] est bon et beau

⁸⁰ Sur cette affaire compliquée, nous renvoyons à Cl. Addas, op. cit. 297-299. Al-Sakhāwī rapporte les deux versions mais privilégie évidemment celle qui condamne Ibn ʿArabī.

⁸¹ Al-Sakhāwī convient que al-Yāfiʿī était connu pour pencher en faveur d'Ibn ʿArabī (ce que confirme la notice que Yāfiʿī consacre à Ibn ʿArabī dans le *Mirʾat al-janān* iv, 100-101) mais retient surtout qu'il réprochait l'étude de ses ouvrages par des lecteurs qui n'avaient pas une connaissance éprouvée des fondements de la Loi sacrée — position qui lui est commune avec nombre d'admirateurs du Shaykh al-akbar.

(*ḥasan jamīl*)". Certes, ajoute-t-il "il y a dans ses œuvres des paroles malsonnantes mais certains de ses disciples prétendent qu'elles ont un autre sens que le sens apparent": jugement réservé, donc, d'un auteur qui avoue son incompetence.

Si l'on écarte, d'une part, les cas douteux de ce genre et, d'autre part, les supputations sur les mœurs des *ittiḥādiyyūn* (licence sexuelle, consommation de vin ou de *ḥashīsh*) ou les légendes qui ridiculisent Ibn ʿArabī (son mariage avec une djinn femelle qui l'aurait battu), reste une quantité à première vue impressionnante de jugements catégoriquement hostiles à la doctrine akbarienne. Cet effet de masse ne doit pas cependant dissimuler la minceur du dossier. Il est d'abord, quantitativement, moins substantiel qu'il n'y paraît si on élimine les répétitions incessantes que j'ai signalées plus haut. La densité des notices n'y est pas, d'autre part, proportionnelle à leur longueur. J'ai mentionné le nombre important de folios réservés à l'obscur al-Suʿūdī.⁸² Il a, nous dit al-Sakhāwī, composé en 711 (du vivant d'Ibn Taymiyya, notons-le en passant) un ouvrage intitulé *Bayān ḥukm mā fi'l-Fuṣūṣ min al-iʿtiqādāt al-mafsūda* où, mettant en application le *ḥadīth*: *al-Dīn al-naṣīḥa*, il réunissait — déjà! — les *responsa* relatives à l'hétérodoxie d'Ibn ʿArabī. Mais une large part de cette notice est occupée par cinq *qaṣīdas* extraites de ce livre. Al-Suʿūdī, versificateur plus besogneux qu'inspiré, y dresse en désordre un catalogue sans surprise des hérésies akbariennes (*waḥdat al-wujūd*, *waḥdat al-adyān*, non-éternité du châtement des damnés, sceau de la sainteté...) dénonçant à diverses reprises dans les *Fuṣūṣ* un *kalām bāṭil*, un *kufr ṣarīḥ*, une *zandaqa*, un soufisme corrompu par la *falsafa*. Puis, dans les passages en prose, il énumère les premiers critiques: al-Qaṣṭallānī, ʿIzz al-Dīn b. ʿAbd al-Salām, al-Jaʿbarī... mais insiste sur Ibn Taymiyya dont il célèbre le zèle et la science et chez qui il semble en fait avoir puisé une grande part de son information. En guise de réfutation des erreurs d'Ibn ʿArabī, il procède — comme le fera plus tard al-Ahdal — par juxtaposition en citant un passage de la *ʿAqīda* d'Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭakhāwī et de l'ouvrage sur les *uṣūl* du ḥanafite al-Awsī. Il rapporte enfin des propos de quarante soufis (al-Nūrī, al-Sarī al-Saqatī, Dhū'l-Nūn, al-Biṣṭāmī, al-Tustarī, al-Shiblī, etc.) pour établir

⁸² Ce personnage mal connu (sur lequel voir GAL ii, 9; EI¹ iv, 600; Kahhāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿaliffīn* vii, 12) ne semble devoir quelque notoriété qu'à la notice de al-Sakhāwī. Le *Muʿjam* lui attribue à tort la paternité du *Qawl al-munbī*.

à partir de ces témoignages qu'il n'est pas de *taṣawwuf* authentique sans observance de la sharia.. ce en quoi Ibn ʿArabī est parfaitement d'accord avec ces maîtres du passé. Le libelle de al-Suʿūdī est-il en réalité plus riche que ne le donnent à penser les extraits retenus par al-Sakhāwī? J'en doute fort. Ce qui est sûr, c'est que l'espace concédé à cet épigone n'est pas justifié par l'intérêt des extraits offerts au lecteur.

Dans d'autres cas, il est clair que al-Sakhāwī n'a pas tiré le meilleur parti possible des ulama qu'il mobilise dans son combat contre l'erreur. D'Ibn Khaldūn, il ne retient que la fameuse fatwa où ce dernier conclut qu'on doit brûler les écrits d'Ibn ʿArabī (et de beaucoup d'autres) ou en effacer le texte par l'eau.⁸³ L'argumentation y est des plus sommaires. La *Muqaddima* ou le *Shifāʾ al-sāʾil*, que al-Sakhāwī ne mentionne même pas, contiennent des analyses qui révèlent qu'Ibn Khaldūn — grâce, sans doute, à son ami Lisān al-Dīn Ibn al-Khaṭīb — est capable d'analyses plus fines et perçoit fort bien par exemple les divergences doctrinales entre l'école d'Ibn ʿArabī et celle d'Ibn Sabʿīn.⁸⁴ ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Bukhārī n'a droit qu'à deux folios et demi. Les propos rapportés (Ibn ʿArabī est *akfar al-kāfirīn*, etc.) ne nous instruisent guère. Or al-Bukhārī, s'il n'a pas, et de loin, la stature de son maître al-Taftāzānī a été formé aux disciplines du *kalām*. S'il lui arrive d'utiliser, comme les *fuqahāʾ*, des arguments simplistes — de soutenir, par exemple, que la *waḥdat al-wujūd* conduit à identifier Dieu aux ordures les plus répugnantes — il recourt aussi à des raisonnements plus serrés, notamment sur la notion d'être (*wujūd*) à propos de laquelle son nominalisme s'oppose radicalement à l'interprétation akbarienne. Comme al-Taftāzānī⁸⁵ — et contrairement à Ibn Taymiyya, qui perçoit cette distinction mais n'en tient finalement aucun compte — il évite la confusion usuelle entre la *waḥdat al-wujūd*, l'*ittiḥād* et le

⁸³ Les circonstances qui amènent Ibn Khaldūn à délivrer cette fatwa présentent un intérêt historique. On constate en effet que des soufis d'Alexandrie défendaient Ibn ʿArabī en s'appuyant sur l'éloge qu'en avait fait Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (voir f. 138b). De fait, l'influence du Shaykh al-akbar sur al-Shādhilī et ses premiers successeurs m'a toujours paru évidente et je ne puis souscrire aux réserves que formulait P. Nwyia sur ce point, *Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh et la naissance de la confrérie shādhilīte* (Beyrouth 1972) 25-26.

⁸⁴ *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (= *Muqaddima*), trad. V. Monteil (Paris, 2e ed., 1978) 1017-1022; *Shifāʾ al-sāʾil* (Beyrouth 1959) 51-52; trad. fr. de R. Perez, *La Loi et la Voie* (Paris 1991) 180-184.

⁸⁵ al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-maqāṣid* (Beyrouth 1989) iv, 59-60. Ibn ʿArabī, clairement visé dans ce passage, n'y est toutefois pas nommé.

hulūl. Or al-Sakhāwī, s'il cite le titre de la *Fādīha*, précisant même que la rédaction en a été achevée en 831 h., n'en fait aucun usage.⁸⁶

La question qui se pose alors est celle-ci: si al-Sakhāwī avait été plus exigeant dans ses choix, s'il avait fait place dans sa "Somme" à des personnages ou à des textes qu'il a écartés, volontairement ou par ignorance, le bilan serait-il intellectuellement moins décevant? Je répondrai personnellement par la négative. Le *Qawl munbī*, quels qu'en soient les défauts, me paraît donner un tableau historiquement exact de la nature des polémiques anti-akbariennes au cours des siècles dont il dresse l'inventaire. La triste vérité est que la médiocrité de l'ouvrage est un fidèle reflet de la médiocrité de la plupart de ces polémiques. Les débats internes au soufisme sur la validité de la doctrine d'Ibn ʿArabī — qui relèveraient d'une toute autre étude et que je n'ai donc pas pris en considération ici — ne sont pas moins violents (j'ai cité le nom de ʿAlāʾ al-Dawla-i Simnānī).⁸⁷ Mais ils ne se limitent pas à des querelles de vocabulaire. Les critiques des *fuqahāʾ* ne portent en définitive que sur les mots. Elles visent des *formules* en excluant non seulement tout *taʾwīl* (ce refus s'exprime avec obstination de génération en génération) mais tout effort pour replacer ces formules dans un contexte qui, s'agissant d'un auteur comme Ibn ʿArabī, devrait être pris au sens large: même si les expressions visées proviennent, comme c'est généralement le cas, des seules *Fuṣūṣ*, c'est aussi à d'autres écrits — et surtout aux *Futūḥāt* — qu'il faudrait se reporter pour en saisir la signification exacte. Autrement dit, ce que montrent sans peine les auteurs de ces *responsa*, c'est que l'œuvre d'Ibn ʿArabī ne doit pas être mise entre toutes les mains. Cette position est parfaitement compréhensible... et elle est aussi celle des plus fermes partisans du Shaykh al-akbar.⁸⁸ Entendues littéralement et hors contexte, nombre de phrases justifient effectivement la censure des *fuqahāʾ*, qu'Ibn ʿArabī lui-même, d'ailleurs, excuse d'avance⁸⁹ à

⁸⁶ On trouvera d'utiles précisions sur la *Fādīha* dans l'introduction de B. Aladdin à l'édition, déjà signalée, du *al-Wujūd al-haqq* de al-Nābulusī qui en est partiellement la réfutation. Comme le précise M. Aladdin, c'est la *Fādīha* que, sous le titre *Radd abāḥil al-Fuṣūṣ*, O. Yaḥyā attribue à al-Taftāzānī.

⁸⁷ Voir note 14. Sur Simnānī, voir H. Landolt, 'Simnānī on waḥdat al-wujūd', in *Wisdom of Persia* iv (Téhéran 1971), ainsi que son édition de la correspondance entre Simnānī et Qāshānī (Téhéran-Paris 1972).

⁸⁸ Je renvoie sur ce point à l'introduction d'*Un océan sans rivage*.

⁸⁹ Voir par exemple dans *Futūḥāt* ii, 79, la fin de la réponse à la question 57 de al-

condition qu'ils demeurent dans les limites de leur compétence et donc se bornent à condamner les expressions litigieuses *prout sonant*. Le problème, c'est que justement, ils ne s'en tiennent pas là et se prononcent sur le fond sans recourir aux procédures qui autoriseraient à le faire. L'anathème, proféré de manière incantatoire (*wa-hādhā kufr mubīn*), tient lieu de démonstration. Feinte ou sincère, l'indignation qu'éprouve le *faqīh* devant tel ou tel passage d'Ibn 'Arabī — le plus souvent choisi dans une liste standard de formules condamnables — lui paraît devoir être automatiquement partagée par tout lecteur musulman sans qu'il soit besoin d'en dire plus et, surtout, de s'interroger sur la possibilité d'une interprétation orthodoxe d'un propos qui, pris *ad litteram*, est suspect ou choquant. Cette indignation est parfois comique car il arrive qu'elle soit suscitée par des textes qui ne sont ni spécialement obscurs, ni spécialement scandaleux. Un bon exemple, sur ce point, nous est fourni par une critique qui n'est pas, cette fois, médiévale mais contemporaine. Il s'agit de la "lettre ouverte" déjà citée du Shaykh Kamāl Aḥmad 'Awn dans laquelle ce dernier, se référant à des expressions extraites des chapitres 2 et 4 des *Futūḥāt Makkiyya*, accuse en quelque sorte Ibn 'Arabī d'hypostasier les Noms divins et d'en faire autant de dieux. Or il n'est pas besoin d'être particulièrement perspicace pour comprendre que le Shaykh al-akbar a recours dans ces pages — comme en plusieurs autres de ses écrits — à un procédé littéraire destiné à illustrer la fonction propre de chacun des *asmā'* traditionnels — c'est à dire des attributs divins — dans la création de l'univers.⁹⁰ Cette scénographie est d'autant moins susceptible d'engendrer de malentendus qu'Ibn 'Arabī ne cesse d'affirmer que les Noms divins ne sont que des "relations" (*nisab*) dépourvues de toute consistance ontologique et qu'ils n'introduisent par conséquent aucune multiplicité dans l'unité de l'essence divine.⁹¹ La réaction violente que soulèvent ces passages relève-t-elle de la naïveté ou de la mauvaise foi? À chacun d'en décider.

Les remarques qui précèdent doivent s'accompagner d'un *caveat*.

Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. Ibn 'Arabī y approuve les *fuqahā'* de "fermer la porte" à des assertions en faveur desquelles ils ne trouvent aucune preuve légale ('nous leur donnons raison et nous jugeons qu'ils méritent que Dieu leur accorde une pleine récompense'). Mais cela sous réserve qu'ils ne tranchent pas catégoriquement (*lam yaqta'ū*) en déclarant intrinsèquement erroné tout ce qui s'écarte de leur propre point de vue.

⁹⁰ Voir *Anqā mughrib* 32 f. de l'édition du Caire 1954; et *Futūḥāt* i, 322 f.

⁹¹ Voir par exemple *Futūḥāt* iv, 294. Ce passage est traduit par William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (Albany 1989) 52.

J'ai parlé des *fuqahā'* en termes généraux, ce qui peut suggérer que je souscris à la thèse soutenue, entre autres, par al-Sakhāwī, selon laquelle il y aurait eu un *ijmā'* des gardiens de la foi pour condamner Ibn 'Arabī. Certains spécialistes ont été tentés de le croire et le "néo-wahhābisme" s'emploie activement à entretenir cette illusion d'optique.

Il convient donc de relativiser l'étendue et la force de cette opposition. Je suis convaincu qu'elle fut et qu'elle demeure encore minoritaire même si, depuis que le wahhābisme lui assure une base logistique et de considérables moyens de communication, elle a la possibilité de se faire entendre plus fort et plus loin. Si les mêmes autorités — au premier rang desquelles Ibn Taymiyya — sont constamment invoquées dans la suite des âges pour appuyer les positions hostiles, c'est bien parce qu'il est malaisé de rassembler un large effectif de noms prestigieux. Quantité d'obscurs *fuqahā'*, figurants plutôt qu'acteurs, sont enrôlés par al-Sakhāwī dans le *Qawl munbī* à côté de ces personnages notoires et s'abritent derrière leur renommée. Mais on ne doit pas oublier qu'il y eut aussi — et sans attendre la période ottomane pendant laquelle l'école akbarienne bénéficia souvent de la faveur impériale — des fatwas favorables à Ibn 'Arabī: les listes que donne O. Yaḥyā n'en épuisent pas le nombre. Il y eut d'autre part, majoritairement, des *fuqahā'* qui, quelles que fussent leurs opinions personnelles, observèrent un strict *tawaqquf*. Les uns le firent sans doute par prudence (les malheurs d'Ibn Taymiyya ou de al-Biqā'ī étaient une leçon pour les téméraires). D'autres le firent par sagesse, signalant — c'était leur rôle — le risque inhérent à la diffusion imprudente de *formulations* qui pouvaient troubler la foi des simples tout en refusant de juger sur le fond et donc de prononcer le *takfīr*. Nous disposons d'ailleurs sur ce point d'un témoignage de poids, celui d'Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, dont al-Sakhāwī fut l'élève. Interrogé, au mois de ṣafar 849, sur le statut légal de ceux qui lisent les *Fuṣūṣ* ou d'autres ouvrages d'Ibn 'Arabī et de ses pareils et qui adhèrent à leurs croyances, il constate — c'est la phrase initiale de sa réponse — que 'de nombreux imams se sont abstenus de parler en mal [d'Ibn 'Arabī et de ses disciples]' (*fa-qad tawaqqafa kathīr min al-a'imma 'an al-qadh*). Les motifs de cette abstention ne sont pas toujours les mêmes. Tantôt, dit-il, elle s'inspire de la supposition charitable que les auteurs en cause sont revenus de leurs erreurs. Tantôt elle se fonde sur leur réputation de piété et de renoncement et sur leurs nombreux charismes. Tantôt enfin les *fuqahā'* s'abstiennent parce qu'il est possible que la

véritable croyance de ces personnages ne soit pas celle qui se déduit de la lettre de leurs écrits. Ibn Ḥajar exprime ensuite, en des termes sévères mais qu'il faut peut-être décrypter à la lumière de ce qui précède, son avis personnel: aucun homme de jugement droit ne peut s'abstenir de voir de l'infidélité (*kufr*) et de l'erreur (*ḍalāl*) dans l'énoncé (*maqāla*) des thèses de ces auteurs. En conséquence, celui qui s'en fait le propagandiste (*al-dāʿī*) est coupable d'un crime grave. Tel est aussi, ajoute-t-il, le point de vue des maîtres qu'il a connus ou dont l'enseignement lui a été transmis.⁹²

La circonspection des "nombreux *imāms*" dont Ibn Ḥajar rapporte avec honnêteté la position n'est pas toujours une vertu facile à pratiquer. Face à la stratégie d'intimidation que mettent en œuvre certains courants radicaux, elle devient parfois héroïque et les héros ne sont pas légion, je l'ai dit. Il s'en trouve cependant. On peut constater même qu'en dépit de campagnes agressives et qui n'épargnent pas les personnes (volontiers dénoncées comme complices d'un complot occidental) les études sur Ibn ʿArabī, les éditions de ses œuvres ou de celles de ses disciples se multiplient dans le *dār al-islām*. Ces travaux sont assurément de valeur inégale. Mais leur existence atteste en tout cas que, si le procès posthume d'Ibn ʿArabī n'est jamais clos, les procureurs ne restent pas seuls à y revendiquer le droit à la parole.

⁹² *al-Qawl al-munbī*, f. 213. La complexité (signalée note 17) de la personnalité d'Ibn Ḥajar est soulignée par la présence de son nom à la fois dans la liste dressée par O. Yahyā des fatwas défavorables à Ibn ʿArabī (*Histoire et classification*, no. 105, 130) et dans celle des fatwas favorables (no. 13, 134). Je n'ai pu consulter les deux manuscrits auxquels O. Yahyā fait référence pour justifier l'insertion d'Ibn Ḥajar dans la seconde liste.

ZAYDĪ ATTITUDES TO SUFISM

WILFERD MADELUNG

The relationship between the religious movement of the Zaydiyya and organized Sufism has been predominantly antagonistic throughout their history. At the root of the conflict was a clash about authority in religion. As a Shii sect, the Zaydiyya recognized the ultimate religious authority of the Family of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*). The Zaydī imams demanded obedience from their followers not just as political rulers but also as teachers and guides in religious matters. Unlike the imams of the Twelver Shia and the Ismāʿīliyya, however, they were not endowed with impeccability and infallibility (*ʿiṣma*) and their religious authority could be challenged. The Sufi shaykhs, who were mostly Sunni, demanded absolute personal obedience from their disciples, though not from their community at large.

Apart from this clash concerning leadership, there were also profound differences in religious motivation which were never bridged. Zaydī Islam was essentially sober, sharia-oriented, legalistic, and rationalist. It lacked and repudiated any dimension of ecstatic intuition, esoteric knowledge and gnosis, and any form of mystical approach to the world of the divine. The Twelver Shia and Ismāʿīliyya shared such features with Sufism, leading Henry Corbin to his view that Sufism itself was in essence a Shii phenomenon. Zaydīs vigorously condemned antinomian and laxist tendencies in Sufism. They took offence at, and strictly forbade, Sufi practices which aimed at inducing states of ecstasy, such as the *samāʿ*, singing, music, dancing, and gazing upon beautiful youths. They totally rejected the speculative mysticism of Ibn al-ʿArabī and his school. Rationalist, anti-mystical Muʿtazilī theology was adopted by the Zaydiyya more consistently than by the Twelver Shia and evidently suited them better. In agreement with the Muʿtazila they generally restricted the possibility of miracles to prophets and denounced claims of miracles by Sufi shaykhs as sheer fraud.

There was, however, an aspect of Sufi piety which could be fully appreciated by the Zaydiyya. Like early Sufism in particular, Zaydī religious devotion contained a strong element of asceticism, i.e. rejection of this world — both its attractions and iniquities — and of a

preoccupation with, and preparation for, the world to come. A popular Zaydī movement like the Muṭarrifiyya in the Yemen, which summoned to withdrawal from the world in *hijras*, to repentance, to ascetic exercises, purification and meditation, can certainly be described as analogous to early Sufism, although there is no evidence of direct Sufi influence on it. Zaydī imams and scholars, however, did not hesitate to praise early ascetic Sufis such as al-Fuḍayl b. ʿIyāḍ, Bishr al-Ḥāfi, al-Junayd and Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī. Indeed they cited their sayings and held them up as individuals who had led exemplary religious lives.

This positive attitude towards early Sufi ascetic piety, together with some reserve, is reflected in the *Risālat siyāsāt al-murīdīn* of the Caspian Zaydī Imam Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Muʿaḥḥad bi'llāh (d. 411/1021).¹ The *Risāla* apparently represents the earliest extant Zaydī literary reaction to Sufism, written by an imam otherwise known as an author on Muʿtazilī Zaydī *kalām* and Zaydī (Hādawī) *fiqh*. The title, *Management of the Desirous*, employs Sufi terminology. Al-Muʿaḥḥad begins by observing that he has found all (religious) disciplines thriving in his time except for the discipline of *muʿāmalā*, i.e. devotional practice, which had become neglected and abandoned. He goes on to quote al-Junayd's characteristic praise of ʿAlī as the potential master in this field. Al-Junayd says: 'God shall call to account those who turned the attention of our master', meaning ʿAlī, 'away from us through (the battles of) the Camel and Šiffīn. If he had not been preoccupied with these wars, he would have set forth for us what we are incapable of accomplishing with regard to these disciplines (*mā lā qibala lanā bih*)'.

The first station of devotion, al-Muʿaḥḥad explains, is repentance (*tawba*), and the foundation of repentance is fear. The *murīd* must therefore instill fear into his own heart, especially by imagining the woes and pains of death. Repentance is followed by desire (*irāda*), which is defined as seeking to turn to God exclusively while cutting oneself loose from everything else (*ṭalab al-inqitāʿ ilā'llāh min kull mā siwāh*). Here al-Muʿaḥḥad quotes *in extenso* a lengthy exhortation (*waṣīyya*) of al-Junayd, stressing the great benefit which the *murīd* may draw from it. Throughout the *Risāla*, al-Muʿaḥḥad cites the prophets, members of the Prophet's Family such as ʿAlī, Zayd b. ʿAlī, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, Jaʿfar al-Šādiq, and al-Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm, and Sufis such as al-Fuḍayl b. ʿIyāḍ, Dāwūd al-Ṭāʾi, Abū Sulaymān

¹ Ms. Ambrosiana C 186.

al-Dārānī, Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī, Abū'l-Ḥusayn al-Nūrī, and Ruwaym b. Aḥmad; but he also warns of the defects of Sufism. The Sufi Ruwaym is quoted as saying: 'This our path consists of expenditure of the spirit (*badhl al-rūḥ*). If you are capable of it, good; but if not, do not occupy yourself with the farces of the Sufis (*turrahāt al-ṣūfiyya*)'.

The search for closeness to God requires constant exertion (*mujāhada*). Yet the enemy, Satan, attempts to delude the *murīd* by suggesting that reaching the goal is simply a gift from God and that effort and struggle in fact place a veil between God and the servant. This delusion affects in particular those who associate with the Sufis (*man yu'āshir ahl al-taṣawwuf*). The Enemy may also suggest to the *murīd* that practices contrary to the sharia may bring him closer to his goal, practices such as listening to singing, dancing, and amusing oneself with games like backgammon and other forms of entertainment. He may encourage him to neglect his religious duties and even to abandon the obligatory prayers while making him believe that he has reached a noble and distinguished station. Al-Mu'ayyad adds that he had met an old shaykh from among the ignorant Sufis (*min jahalat al-ṣūfiyya*) who used to lament about the long years (of his vain struggle) since he had not reached the goal, and who now thought that this would come about by merely removing the screen between himself and God. Al-Mu'ayyad expresses shock at such monstrous ignorance. He also refers with disgust to the class of Sufis who call themselves the blameworthy (*ahl al-malāma*). They claim that by involving themselves in evil situations and committing reprehensible acts they abase their ego, yet in reality they fall from the state of repentance and may well revert to being offenders (*fussāq*). Al-Mu'ayyad ignores any mystical states beyond that of *irāda*. Instead he concludes his treatise with a chapter on worship (*'ibāda*) and holds up as examples the Prophet and 'Alī Zayn al-'Abidin who spent their lives in strenuous and never-ceasing worship.

Al-Mu'ayyad's treatise set the guidelines for later Zaydī attitudes to Sufism. It was brought to the Yemen together with his major works and is quoted at length in his biography in Ḥumayd al-Muḥallī's *al-Ḥadā'iq al-wardiyya*, the large Yemenite collection of the lives of the early Zaydī imams.² The guidelines did not entirely prevent internal Zaydī controversy with respect to later develop-

² See W. Madelung, *Arabic Texts concerning the History of the Zaydī Imams of Tabaristān, Daylamān and Gilān* (Beirut 1987) 293-305.

ments in Sufism. Some time after 560/1165, a Zaydī pretender to the imamate, Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Dāwūdī, was active in the Caspian region. He had written a book entitled *al-Wasīla ilā 'l-faḍīla* which is described as similar to al-Ghazālī's *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl*. His followers were accused of being negligent with regard to the sharia. The Caspian Zaydī community was split concerning him, and his opponents backed a counter-candidate, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ghaznawī, for the imamate. The conflict continued for thirty years.³ The prominent religious figure of al-Ghazālī and his Sufism evidently evoked a mixed response among Zaydīs. His espousal of a strong ethical dimension in the sharia appealed to many of them. The more esoteric aspects of his Sufism and his defence of the practice of *samāʿ* mostly met with opposition.

In the eighth/fourteenth century the Caspian Zaydī community came under the rule of an ʿAlid dynasty, which lasted until the community's absorption into Twelver Shiism in the early Safavid period. The founder of the dynasty, Sayyid ʿAlī Kiyā b. Amīr Kiyā al-Malāṭī, was the leader of a Sufi movement of 'penitents' (*tāʾibān*). The Zaydī scholars of Lāhījān, according to Ḥabīb al-Dīn Marʿashī's account, recognized him as the imam, testifying that he possessed all five qualifications required by Zaydī law for the imamate. Only one of them, Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad al-Ṣāliḥī, dissented and went into exile in Rasht.⁴ At present nothing further is known about the Sufism and religious policy of the dynasty.

In the Yemen, conflict between the Zaydiyya and Sufis did not arise until the seventh/thirteenth century.⁵ The Zaydīs seem to have kept Sufism out of the highlands from Ṣaʿda to Ṣanʿāʾ and Dhamār where they were dominant, and there is little mention of Sufism in the writings of the early Yemenite imams. Organized Sufism spread in the Sunni, mostly Shāfiʿī, lowlands, Tihāma, Zabīd, and Taʿizz from the fifth/eleventh century on.⁶ As Zaydī imams sought to extend their domination into the lowlands, Sufi shaykhs, who wielded

³ W. Madelung, *Der Imam al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen* (Berlin 1965) 217-8.

⁴ Ḥabīb al-Dīn Marʿashī, *Tārīkh-i Gilān wa Daylamān*, ed. M. Sutūdeh (Tehran 1347/1969) 16, 41.

⁵ The following account is based in part on the study of ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥabshī (al-Ḥibshī), *al-Ṣūfiyya wa'l-fuqahāʾ fi 'l-Yaman* (Ṣanʿāʾ 1396/1976). My thanks are due to Mr. Bernard Haykel for making available some of the literature used in this study and for valuable advice.

⁶ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 12.

considerable influence over the local populace, put up resistance. The Zaydī Imam al-Mahdī li-dīn Allāh Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn, who ruled from 646-656/1249-1258, wrote a letter to Abū'l-Ghayth b. Jamīl (d. 651/1253), the most prominent Yemenite Sufi shaykh — at that time active in the village of Bayt 'Aṭā' in Wādī Surdud — and summoned him politely to unite with him in 'ordering what is proper and forbidding what is reprehensible'. Abū'l-Ghayth replied to him with equal politeness, assuring him that if God supported al-Mahdī no one could overcome him. He, Abū'l-Ghayth, had heard and was following the summons of the Truth (*ḥaqq*), God, and after that there was no room left to respond to the summons of any creature.⁷

The surface politeness concealed the deep aversion of the Sufi to the pretense of the Zaydī imam. It was at this time, or perhaps on an earlier occasion when a Zaydī imam intended to invade the lowlands, that Abū'l-Ghayth wrote to another Sufi shaykh, Muḥammad b. Ismā'il al-Ḥaḍramī, proposing that they both depart from Yemen because of the spread of civil strife (*ḡuhūr al-fitan*) there. Al-Ḥaḍramī, who was active in al-Ḍaḥī near al-Mahjam, replied that he was unable to leave because of his many dependents and close relatives and suggested that each one of them protect his region. Abū'l-Ghayth also decided to stay in the Yemen.⁸

Abū'l-Ghayth's rejection of Imam al-Mahdī's overture did not lead to a serious deterioration of the relations between Zaydīs and Sufis. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Daylamī, a Zaydī scholar who came to the Yemen from the Caspian region, does not deal with the Sufis among the heretics and opponents of the Prophet's Family in his large *Kitāb qawā'id Āl Muḥammad* completed in 707/1307.⁹ In his *Kitāb al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm bi'l-dīn al-qawīm*, written a year later, he endorses Sufi ethics and ascetic practice, describing fear of God, *taqwā*, as the only condition for salvation. He names al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-Dīn* and 'other books of the ascetics' as works in which all erroneous opinions are rejected. Occasionally he refers to Imam al-Mu'ayyad's *Risālat siyāsāt al-murīdīn*, to the Shii imams

⁷ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 53-4.

⁸ al-Sharjī, *Ṭabaqāt al-khawāṣṣ ahl al-ṣidq wa'l-ikhlāṣ* (Beirut 1406/1986) 280. Al-Ḥabshī seems to interpret the passage incorrectly in suggesting that Abū'l-Ghayth was at this time active in the highlands and proposed to move to Tihāma (op. cit. 55). Abū'l-Ghayth had been active in the highlands at an earlier stage (al-Sharjī, op. cit. 407), but when he wrote his letter to al-Ḥaḍramī he was certainly living in the Tihāma.

⁹ Ms. Ṣan'ā', Great Mosque; see al-Sayyid al-Ḥusaynī, *Mu'allafāt al-Zaydiyya* (Qumm 1413/1993) ii, 357.

Jaʿfar al-Šādiq and al-Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm, but most often he cites Sunni Sufis.¹⁰ His *Kitāb al-taṣfiya ʿan al-mawānī ʿal-murdiya al-muhlika*, a work on religious ethics, was later read and quoted by Zaydīs inclining to Sufism.¹¹

The Zaydī Imam al-Muʿaḥḥad bi'llāh Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza, who reigned from 729-749/1328-1349, maintained good relations with the well-known Yemenite Sufi shaykh and historian ʿAfīf al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh b. Asʿad al-Yāfiʿī (d. 768/1376-7) residing in Mekka. Al-Yāfiʿī notes in his large history *Mirʾāt al-janān wa-ʿibrat al-yaqẓān* that the imam appreciated a *qaṣīda* in which al-Yāfiʿī extolled the Sufis in general and his shaykh ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṭawāshī in particular, using metaphors (*istiʿārāt*) which were censured by some Sunni scholars. While on a raid against the Ismāʿīlīs of Ḥarāz, al-Muʿaḥḥad asked a pilgrim on his way to Mecca to bring back from the latter city some of the writing (*kalām*) of al-Yāfiʿī, stating that he admired two of his *qaṣīdas*, one of them in praise of his shaykh. Al-Yāfiʿī expresses astonishment that the metaphors in his *qaṣīda* should be appreciated by one of the opponents (of Sunnism) who deny the stations (*maqāmāt*) of the mystics, while they were denounced by a Sunni.¹²

Imam Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza, a prolific author, wrote a large book on religious ethics and etiquette entitled *Taṣfiyat al-qulūb min daran al-awẓār wa'l-dhunūb*. It may well have been patterned on al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-Dīn* as has repeatedly been suggested.¹³ The work reflects Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza's lack of sectarian zeal and his openness to Sunni learning. Hardly anything is said about the religious rank of the *ahl al-bayt* as is common in Zaydī works. In the section about the death of the Prophet and the early caliphs, Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān are treated virtually on a par with ʿAlī. Al-Muʿaḥḥad Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn's *Siyāsat al-murīdīn* is not mentioned. While there are few citations of ʿAlī and his descendants, quotations from early Sufis, including Ibrāhīm b. Adham, al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī, Abū

¹⁰ See Madelung, *Der Imam al-Qāsim* 220.

¹¹ *Muʿallafāt* i, 290-1. The Zaydī Sufi Ibrāhīm al-Kaynaʿī (d. 793/1391) owned a copy of the book and quoted from it (Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī, *Ṣilat al-ikhwān*, Ms. Ambrosiana D 222, fol. 26a).

¹² al-Yāfiʿī, *Mirʾāt al-janān* (Hyderabad 1347-49/1919-21) iv, 315; al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 63-4. Al-Muʿaḥḥad is called by al-Yāfiʿī *imām al-Zaydiyya al-ʿallāma al-fāḍil Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza*.

¹³ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 65; Ismāʿīl b. Aḥmad al-Jirāfī, introduction to his edition of *Taṣfiyat al-qulūb* (Ṣanʿāʾ 1408/1988).

Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī and al-Shiblī, abound. The author points out that the Sufi shaykhs (*mashyakhat al-ṭarīq fī 'l-taṣawwuf*) had much to say about the reality of good ethics (*ḥaqīqat ḥusn al-khuluq*), though they said more to explain its norms and the way to achieve its fruits than about its nature and definition.¹⁴

Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza is adamant, however, that singing belongs to the evils of the tongue. The masters of the *ahl al-bayt* and the imams from among them are agreed that it is prohibited and reprehensible, that it is contrary to virtue and religion, and that its practice invalidates legal testimony and integrity. This was also the view of Sunni jurists such as Abū Ḥanīfa, al-Shāfi'ī, Mālik, Sufyān al-Thawrī and others. The deviant opinion of Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī that it is permitted and recommended deserves no consideration. Al-Ghazālī's evidence in support of his opinion was tenuous and based on statements of men without authority, which should be seen as an outrage and baseness in religion. Al-Ghazālī, Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza adds, surely could have dispensed with lending support to the permissibility and promotion of singing and have avoided discussing it in his religious books, not to mention arguing in favour of it.¹⁵ Imam Yaḥyā evidently had strong feelings on the subject, for he also wrote a shorter book entitled *'Iqd al-la'ālī' fī'l-radd 'alā Abī Ḥamid al-Ghazālī* in which he specifically refuted al-Ghazālī's chapter on *samā'* in the *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-Dīn*.¹⁶

Sufism is not expressly mentioned in Imam Yaḥyā's condemnation of singing. In a chapter on the delusion (*ghurūr*) of various religious and social groups, however, the Sufis (*ahl al-taṣawwuf*) occupy a prominent position. Imam Yaḥyā describes the kinds (*ṣīnf*) of delusion to which Sufis commonly fall victim. These range from their dress and speech, in which the 'would-be Sufis of our time (*mutaṣawwifat ahl zamāninā*) imitate the true Sufis such as al-Junayd, al-Shiblī, al-Bisṭāmī and others, to fraudulent claims of gnosis, antinomian libertinism, and false hopes of having reached the ultimate goal (*wuṣūl*).¹⁷

Imam Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza, it should be noted, also espoused the Mu'tazilī theological doctrine of the school of Abū'l-Ḥusayn al-

¹⁴ *Taṣfiyat al-qulūb* 37.

¹⁵ *Taṣfiyat al-qulūb* 139. The passage is quoted by al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad in his *Ḥaṭf anḥ al-āfīk* (ms. in a private collection in Ḍahyān) 63-4. Al-Manṣūr omits the mention of al-Ghazālī.

¹⁶ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 65; al-Ḥusaynī, *Mu'allafāt* ii, 272.

¹⁷ *Taṣfiyat al-qulūb* 498-501.

Baṣrī which, in contrast to the doctrine of the school of Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī previously prevalent among the Zaydiyya, upheld the possibility of *karāmāt*, miracles of non-prophets including Sufi saints.¹⁸ His teaching evidently furthered the emergence of an indigenous order of moderate Sufism in the Yemenite Zaydī community. Substantial information about this development is furnished by the sayyid Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī b. Qāsim b. Muṭahhar al-Zaydī al-Ḥusaynī in his hagiographical account of the life of his shaykh and founder of a Sufi order, Ibrāhīm b. Aḥmad al-Kayna'ī (d. 793/1391), entitled *Ṣilat al-ikhwān fī ḥilyat barakat ahl al-zamān*. There is some evidence for an influence from the Caspian Zaydī community, where Sufi currents had been strong for a long time. Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī mentions the sayyid Aḥmad b. Amīr [b. al-Nāṣir al-Ḥasanī] al-Jilānī, who came to the Yemen from the country of the Jil and Daylam intending to visit Imam al-Mu'ayyad Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza. When he arrived al-Mu'ayyad had already died, and he visited his successor, Imam al-Mahdī 'Alī b. Muḥammad (750-73/1359-71) in Ṣa'da and al-Mahdī's son and later successor, al-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Alī, who at that time was teaching Koran-reading in Maṣna'at Banī Qays. This sayyid, according to Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī, was the author of books on devotion and asceticism, among them one entitled *Ṣafwat al-ṣafwa fī zuhd al-ṣaḥāba*.¹⁹

When Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī visited Sayyid Aḥmad b. Amīr al-Jilānī in Mekka, he found the qadī²⁰ al-Ḥasan b. Salmān with him. This Yemenite from Wādī'l-Ḥār near Dhamār is described by Yaḥyā as the first person to practice the worship of the Sufis (*ahl al-ṭarīqa*) in the land of the Zaydiyya and the first to dress in their garb. At the same time he was an erudite scholar in religious law, *ḥadīth*, and Koranic exegesis. In particular he was an expert in the legal doctrine of the Caspian Zaydī imam al-Nāṣir li'l-Ḥaqq.²¹ He may well have been introduced to this subject by the Jilānī sayyid.²² Al-Ḥasan b.

18 *Der Imam al-Qāsim* 222 and note 456

19 *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 19b-20a. Aḥmad b. Amīr al-Jilānī was later remembered among the Yemenite Zaydiyya as the one who brought the six-volume *Kitāb al-jāmi' al-kāfi* of Abū 'Abd Allāh al-'Alawī on early Kūfan Zaydī *fiqh* to the Yemen and presented it to Imam al-Mahdī 'Alī b. Muḥammad (see *Der Imam al-Qāsim* 88, note 236).

20 The title *qadī* was in Yemenite usage of the time often applied to non-'Alid scholars, who were not necessarily judges.

21 Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī, *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 19a.

22 The Nāṣirī religious law was not practiced in the Yemen and presumably not normally taught. Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī does not provide any information about al-Ḥasan b. Salmān's teachers. It is to be noted, however, that he must have been well-known as a Sufi ascetic

Salmān was an active supporter of Imam al-Mahdī urging the people to join his *jihād* against the opponents of the Zaydiyya and to pay their alms-tax to him.²³ The *hijra* which he founded in Wādī'l-Ḥār is still thriving under his name.²⁴

Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī refers to al-Ḥasan b. Salmān as the shaykh and model in piety of Ibrāhīm al-Kayna^ci, who later continued to visit him every year. More important, however, as al-Kayna^ci's teacher seems to have been ^cAlī b. ^cAbd Allāh b. Abī'l-Khayr [al-Ṣāyidi],²⁵ whom Yaḥyā also designates as his shaykh in asceticism and his model in words and deeds. Ibn Abī'l-Khayr was a prominent Zaydī scholar at the time, learned in religious law, legal methodology and theology, and author of books on many subjects, including refutations of the predestinarians (*mujbira*), Islamic sects, and Ismā'īlīs (*malāḥida*). He also wrote on the sciences of Sufi devotion, asceticism, and the stories (*ḥikāyāt*) of the Sufis, the praiseworthy as well as the reprehensible.²⁶ Probably late in his career, he personally became engaged in Sufi practice and devotion. In 773/1371-2 he was initiated into the practice of *dhikr* by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Nassākh who in turn had been initiated by Yūsuf [b. ^cAbd Allāh b. ^cUmar al-Kurdī] al-Kūrānī (d. 768/1367), an Egyptian shaykh well-known for his special practice of *dhikr* which he propagated among his followers in many countries.²⁷ Al-Kūrānī traced his *silsila* back through Abū'l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d. 563/1168) to Ja^cfar al-Ṣādiq and ^cAlī b. Abī Ṭālib.²⁸

In spite of his involvement with Sufism, Ibn Abī'l-Khayr upheld the critical attitude of the Zaydiyya to some aspects of Sufi belief and practice. Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī quotes his treatise *al-Muqaddima wa'l-wazā'if fi ṭarīq al-murīd wa'l-ṭā'if* in which, after describing

already before al-Jilānī's arrival since Yaḥyā reports that the latter went to visit him when he arrived in the Yemen (*Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 20a).

²³ *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 19b, 34b. Al-Ḥasan b. Salmān is said to have reached an age of more than 130 years.

²⁴ Hijrat Ḥasan Salmān; see al-Qāḍī Ismā'īl b. ^cAlī al-Akwa^c, *al-Madkhal ilā hijar al-ilm wa-ma'āqilihī fi 'l-Yaman* (Beirut 1415/1995) 82.

²⁵ Ṣāyid is a branch of Hamdān.

²⁶ *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 46a. On extant works by Ibn Abī'l-Khayr see *Mu'allafāt* iii, 227-8, where he is listed under three different names: ^cAlī b. ^cAbd Allāh Abī'l-Khayr, ^cAlī b. ^cAbd Allāh al-Ṣā'idi, and ^cAlī b. ^cAbd Allāh b. Abī'l-Khayr.

²⁷ On Yūsuf al-Kūrānī see Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-kāmina* (Hyderabad 1350/1931-2) iv, 463. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Najrī al-Nassākh was, according to Ibn Abī'l-Rijāl (*Maṭla' al-budūr*, ms., s.v.), a religious scholar from Khubbān (Khabbān?) with whom the Zaydī imam Ibn al-Murtaḍā read al-Zamakhsharī's Koran commentary *al-Kashshāf*.

²⁸ *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 48b-49a. On Abū'l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī see GAL i, 436, S i, 780.

the obstacles on the path to spiritual perfection, he specifically warns against the belief of some Sufis that contravention of the sharia is permissible once one has reached a high station, against false doctrines like anthropomorphism, determinism, and *irjāʿ*, against refusing *jihād* on behalf of the Prophet's Family and failure to respond to their summons, and against listening to music, dancing and ecstatic love (*wajd*).²⁹

Ibrāhīm al-Kaynaʿī received the *dhikr* and his Sufi frock (*khirqā*) from Ibn Abī'l-Khayr.³⁰ The Banū'l-Kaynaʿī, his family, were local chiefs and owned castles one day's journey (*barīd*) west of Dhamār. Ibrāhīm was fully trained in Zaydī religious law and theology. He became closely associated with Imam al-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAlī (ruled 773-793/1371-1391) and participated in some of his campaigns against the Ṭayyibī Ismāʿīlīs,³¹ who at this time were closely allied with the Sunni Rasūlids ruling in Taʿizz and were the major rivals of the Zaydīs in the highlands. The imam backed him and used to visit him annually in Dhamār, seeking the blessing of his prayer. During al-Kaynaʿī's stay in Ṣanʿāʾ, al-Nāṣir would visit him monthly or every second month for a solitary session with him. Al-Kaynaʿī received material help for his Sufi brethren from the imam, who, at his request, gave a house confiscated from the Ismāʿīlīs in Ṣanʿāʾ to one of them.³² According to Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī, al-Kaynaʿī stated that he had met no one better informed about the practices and disciplines of the mystics than Imam al-Nāṣir. He had seen in the imam's library rare books on the sciences of the ascetics and stories about the saints which he had not seen anywhere else, among them al-Ghazālī's *Kīmīyāʾ al-saʿāda* and parts of his *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*.³³

Al-Kaynaʿī founded Sufi communities all over northern Yemen which he visited regularly, in Dhamār, Maʿbar, Maṣnaʿat Banī Qays, Khubbān (?), Ṣanʿāʾ, Thulā, Ḥūth, Waʿra, Qāra, Ṣafār, and Ṣaʿda.³⁴ He established *hijras* for retreat and devotion, among them Hijrat Maʿbar in Jahrān, Hijrat ʿArām and Hijrat al-Washal in Wādī Zubayd and the region of Dhamār. One of his followers, al-Ḥasan b.

²⁹ *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 47b.

³⁰ *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 49a. Yaḥyā b. al-Mahdī in turn obtained his initiation and *khirqā* from al-Kaynaʿī.

³¹ *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 36b.

³² *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 29a-b.

³³ *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 36b-37a; al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 62-3.

³⁴ *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 19a, 66b.

Mūsā al-Awtānī, founded Hijrat al-Awtān in Bilād Madhḥij.³⁵ The qadī ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥasan al-Dawwārī (d. 800/1397-8) invited him to come to Ṣaʿda in order to spread his blessings there. Many of the local inhabitants responded to his call and began to practice asceticism and *dhikr* and to read books of devotion in the mosque of Imam al-Manṣūr in the desert of Ṣaʿda (*barriyyat Ṣaʿda*). Their leader in worship was another Caspian immigrant to the Yemen, Dāwūd b. Muḥammad al-Jilānī, known for his great miracles and as the author of books on Sufi devotional sciences.³⁶

Al-Kaynaʿī evidently represented a Zaydī form of ascetic Sufism which found favour with Imam al-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn because it supported the Zaydī imamate and repudiated the Sufi practices generally condemned by the imams. In contrast, the uneasy truce which had prevailed between the Zaydis and the Sunni Sufis was shattered towards the end of al-Nāṣir's reign due to a particular incident. Aḥmad b. Zayd al-Shāwiri, a Shāfiʿī scholar of the law and Sufi shaykh active in the region of Ḥajja,³⁷ at that time just outside Zaydī territory, used to denounce the Zaydī creed and doctrine, and wrote a short book in which he raised the call to support Sunnism and warned against innovation.³⁸ In 793/1391 Imam al-Nāṣir raided his area with a strong army. The house of the shaykh was attacked, and he, his son Abū Bakr, and several of his companions were killed, although they had not put up any armed resistance. As a result of the conquest, the people of the region converted from Shāfiʿī Sunnism to Hādawī (Zaydī) Shiism.³⁹ The violent death of the respected shaykh provoked a strong Sunni reaction. The prominent Shāfiʿī scholar and poet Ismāʿīl b. Abī Bakr al-Muqrī, who belonged to al-Shāwiri's people, composed a lengthy elegy on his death in which he sharply condemned the imam for his transgression.⁴⁰ Ismāʿīl al-Muqrī, it should be noted, later became a vociferous Sunni critic of Sufism, in particular of the school of Ibn al-ʿArabī.⁴¹ At this time he was evi-

³⁵ al-Akwaʿ, *al-Madkhal* 82.

³⁶ *Ṣilat al-ikhwān* 66b-67a. A *Kitāb al-Maqāṣid al-ukhrawiyya al-muntazaʿ min kitāb al-anwār al-muḍiyya* by him is extant in part (*Muʿallafāt* iii, 44).

³⁷ The region of Ḥajja is named in the account of al-Sharjī. Yahyā b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Muʿayyad speaks of the Banū Shāwir in Bilād Lāʿa and Bilād Qatāba [*Anbāʾ al-zaman*, quoted in Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Zabāra, *Aʿimmat al-Yaman* (Taʿizz 1372/1952) i, 277].

³⁸ al-Sharjī, op. cit. 78. According to al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 55, note 3, the book was refuted by Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Faḍlī in his *al-Inṣāf fi ʾl-radd ʿalā ahl al-zaygh waʾl-iʿtiṣāf*.

³⁹ Zabāra, *Aʿimmat al-Yaman* i, 277.

⁴⁰ al-Sharjī, op. cit. 78; al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 55-6.

⁴¹ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 135-42; Alexander Knysh, 'Ibn ʿArabī in the Yemen', *Journal of*

dently still attracted to the Sufis.

Al-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's first successor, overthrown and imprisoned after only one year, was Imam al-Mahdī Aḥmad b. Yahyā al-Murtaḍā (d. 840/1437), author of the massive Zaydī theological and legal encyclopaedia *al-Baḥr al-zakhkhār*. In the eleventh book of the encyclopaedia, entitled *Takmilat al-aḥkām wa'l-taṣfiya 'an bawāṭin al-āthām*, Ibn al-Murtaḍā dealt with religious ethics in a Sufi fashion. He provided a large commentary to it under the title *Thamarāt al-akmām*. The book, according to al-Ḥabshī, was widely studied among Yemenite Sufis. As late as the eleventh/seventeenth century commentaries and supplements to it were written by the Zaydī scholar Ṣalāḥ b. 'Abd al-Khālīq al-Jaḥḥāf (d. 1053/1643),⁴² as well as al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Jalāl (d. 1084/1673)⁴³ and others. Ibn al-Murtaḍā furthermore composed some smaller treatises on Sufi topics such as his *Ḥayāt al-qulūb fī iḥyā'* 'ibādat 'allām al-ghuyūb and *al-Zahra al-zāhira bi-taḥqīr al-dunyā wa-ta'ẓīm al-ākhirā*.⁴⁴ Yet he also wrote a book which refutes those scholars who allowed amusements and the use of musical instruments, entitled *Kitāb al-qamar al-nawwār fī 'l-radd 'alā 'l-murakkhhiṣīn fī 'l-malāḥī wa'l-mizmār*. Here he quotes at length the *ḥadīths* condemning musical instruments, singing, the purchase of singing slave girls, etc., which Imam al-Manṣūr 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥamza (d. 614/1217) had collected in his *Kitāb al-shāfi*.⁴⁵ In a *Qaṣida qāfiyya* Ibn al-Murtaḍā censured those who 'proscribed the books of right guidance and allowed the tambourine and the flute (*mizmār*) in the markets', whose enemies were the scholars ('*ulamā'*') and whose friend was the dancing and clapping would-be Sufi (*al-mutaṣawwif al-raqqāṣ al-ṣaffāq*).⁴⁶

the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabī Society ix (1992) 50-6; Ṭāhā Aḥmad Zayd, *Ismā'īl al-Muqrī: ḥayātuhū wa-shi'ruhū* (Beirut 1996).

⁴² *Nihāyat al-afḥām li-ma'ānī Takmilat al-aḥkām*; see *Mu'allafāt* iii, 132.

⁴³ *Talqīh al-afḥām bi-ṣaḥīḥ al-kalām 'alā Takmilat al-aḥkām*; see *Mu'allafāt* i, 325.

⁴⁴ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 65-6.

⁴⁵ This section of Ibn al-Murtaḍā's *al-Qamar al-nawwār* is quoted by al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad in his *Ḥatf anf al-āfik* 34-7. In the edition of al-Manṣūr 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥamza's *Kitāb al-shāfi* (Ṣan'ā' 1406/1986) the text is found in vol. i, 221-3. 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥamza reports these *ḥadīths* in the context of his censure of the behaviour of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs, not as anti-Sufi polemics. By contrast, the Amīr al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Yahyā (d. 662/1261) in his *Kitāb al-yanābī' al-ṣaḥīḥa*, after citing the traditions forbidding play and amusements, adds a warning for the seeker of right guidance not to be deceived by the Ṣūfiyya and the empty rhetoric of the Ḥashwiyya (*al-Yanābī' al-ṣaḥīḥa*, facsimile edition by Aḥmad Muḥammad Ḥajar, Ṣan'ā' n.d., 352). The passage is quoted by al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad in his *Ḥatf anf al-āfik* 42-3.

⁴⁶ Quoted by al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad, *Ḥatf anf al-āfik* 40-1.

Another book on religious ethics entitled *Kanz al-rashād wa-zād al-ma‘ād* was written by Imam al-Hādī ‘Izz al-Dīn b. al-Ḥasan al-Yahyawī (ruled 879-900/1474-1495).⁴⁷ ‘Izz al-Dīn deals with the reprehensible character traits which must be avoided and the sound ones which the worshipper should strive to acquire. In the introduction he mentions his having read books encouraging asceticism (*kutub zuḥdiyya*) and treatises of ‘the people of the approved path (*ahl al-ṭarīq al-marḍiyya*)’.⁴⁸ At the end, however, he stresses that he never pursued the path and apologizes to those readers who believe that only those who have reached a high rank travelling the path themselves ought to write about the subject.⁴⁹ In the course of his exposition he frequently quotes from Sunni *ḥadīth*-collections. He praises al-Ghazālī for his powerful discourse in condemning man’s attachment to worldly chattels,⁵⁰ but rarely mentions any other Sufi.⁵¹

‘Izz al-Dīn’s predecessor, Imam al-Mutawakkil al-Muṭahhar b. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Ḥamzī (ruled 840-879/1436-1474), was evidently more hostile to Sufism. Al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad in his *Ḥatf anḥ al-āfīk* quotes some lines of poetry in which this imam derides the doctrines of a people whose religion consists of play and who dance and clap in the darkness of night. They end up in the intoxication of ecstasy deprived of their minds. Never has any *sunna* supported this practice, nor does the Book of God justify it.⁵²

Systematic persecution of Sufis was initiated by Imam al-Mutawakkil Sharaf al-Dīn Yaḥyā b. Shams al-Dīn, who ruled from 912 to 965/1506-1558. In his *Kitāb al-athmār*, a popular abridgement of Ibn al-Murtaḍā’s *Kitāb al-azhār*, Sharaf al-Dīn accused the Sufis of generally furthering hostility to the ‘Alids (*naṣb*). Some of them maintained that the Family of Muḥammad (*āl Muḥammad*) consisted of all followers (*atbā‘*) of the Prophet.⁵³ Al- quotes Imam

⁴⁷ The book was completed in 897/1492. *Kanz al-rashād* (Ṣan‘ā’ 1392/1972) 138.

⁴⁸ *Kanz* 21.

⁴⁹ *Kanz* 137-8.

⁵⁰ *Kanz* 71.

⁵¹ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 66. Al-Ḥabshī erroneously states that Imam ‘Izz al-Dīn in his introduction warns against the ecstatic sciences (*‘ulūm shāṭhiyya*) of the Sufis and quotes a *qaṣīda* criticizing them. This introduction is, however, by the modern editor of the text, ‘Abd al-Wāsi‘ b. Yaḥyā al-Wāsi‘ī, not by the imam.

⁵² al-Manṣūr, *Ḥatf anḥ al-āfīk* 46.

⁵³ See the quotation in al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 57.

Sharaf al-Dīn's response to someone asking him about the Šūfiyya:

'This sect (*firqa*) which in our time and before it has been called the Šūfiyya has no foundation in religion on which they can rely and no proof (*burhān*) in reason or in the law of religion (*sharʿ*) to which they can refer. Rather, their affairs are based upon false fancies, empty rhetoric, deceptive illusions, and claims remote from truth and veracity. Whoever enters into these fancies to any extent departs from Islam and embraces unbelief (*kufr*) without any doubt. He becomes a corporealist and a denier of divine attributes in the recognition of the Omniscient King. This is well-known to every scholar who peruses their books and to every wise learned man who takes cognizance of their secrets. It is therefore incumbent upon every Muslim not to affiliate himself with them, nor to wear any of their emblems, nor to imitate (*yataṣhabbah*) any one of them; for it has come down in tradition that whoever imitates a people is counted as one of them. The rules for charging someone with unbelief and grave immorality (*aḥkām al-takfīr wa'l-taḥsīq*) are based on this'.⁵⁴

Imam Sharaf al-Dīn thus clearly branded the practice of Sufism as potentially constituting infidelity. According to Ibn Abī'l-Rijāl, he forbade adherence to Sufism and entering upon their path from the beginning of his reign. As a result, all public display of Sufi ceremonial practices disappeared, and Sufi dancing, clapping, and singing became concealed in houses.⁵⁵ In 939/1532 he summoned several Sufis, among them the qadi Muḥammad b. ʿAṭf Allāh al-ʿAbsī,⁵⁶ to a debate concerning their religious beliefs. After the debate Sharaf al-Dīn threatened to treat qadi Muḥammad as an apostate, to force him to relinquish his spouses, and, after a period of grace, to execute him if the latter did not renounce his Sufism. Qadi Muḥammad recanted after having been beaten and tortured and wrote a declaration in which he explained his renunciation of Sufism. The others also repented.⁵⁷ A sayyid ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Qāsim was likewise forced by Imam Sharaf al-Dīn to sever his ties with Sufism. The sayyid had been enticed to the heresy by the shaykh ʿAlī al-Jabartī who had visited al-Zahrayn in the region of Ḥajja, and had accompanied him on his travels. When his Sufi proclivities be-

⁵⁴ al-Manšūr, *Ḥaṭf* 41-2. Al-Manšūr adds that the text of the response is much longer and invites anyone interested to read it in the original.

⁵⁵ Ibn Abī'l-Rijāl, quoted by al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 58. Al-Ḥabshī is evidently mistaken in suggesting (57) that Sharaf al-Dīn's hostility to Sufism was the result of the Sufi support of the Ottoman Turks and their forsaking him in his struggle against the invaders. From the account of Ibn Abī'l-Rijāl and other sources it is clear that Sharaf al-Dīn began to persecute the Sufis long before the Ottoman invasion in 945/1538.

⁵⁶ Thus the name given by al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 57. In *Zabāra, Aʿimmat al-Yaman* i, 408, the name appears as Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAnsī.

⁵⁷ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 57-8; *Aʿimmat al-Yaman* i, 408.

came apparent, the imam imprisoned him in the fortress of al-^cArūs and reprimanded him. He was only released after writing a declaration in which he dissociated himself from the teaching of the Sufis.⁵⁸

Less fortunate was another Sufi shaykh, Ḥasan b. ^cAlī al-Jadr, who espoused the Sufism of the practitioners of ecstatic utterances (*shattāhūn*) and attracted many followers. The imam disdained to debate with him at the time of his debate with other Sufis since he considered him deficient in religious learning. When the forces of the imam seized Ṣa^cda in 940/1533, a letter of Ḥasan al-Jadr was found in which he encouraged the Sufis there to remain faithful to their convictions, assuring them that the words and rebukes of the imam did not frighten him. The imam wanted to kill him, but the imam's son, Shams al-Dīn, persuaded him to have him imprisoned. Ḥasan al-Jadr then swore that he had renounced Sufism both in secret and in public and that his letter had been written before the repentance of Qāḍī Muḥammad al-^cAbsī. The imam accepted his excuses, and had him released. Some time later, however, it became apparent that Ḥasan al-Jadr still secretly adhered to his Sufi doctrines. He was executed in Ṣan^cā³ in Ṣafar 942/Aug. 1535 at the order of the imam.⁵⁹

Anti-Sufi polemics reached their climax with Imam al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad (ruled 1006-1029/1598-1620), the founder of the Qāsimī imamate. Al-Manṣūr's reign was dominated by his relentless struggle against the Ottoman occupation of the Yemen. The Yemenite Sufis had initially welcomed the Ottoman invasion, and they were in turn courted by the Turkish governors.⁶⁰ Al-Manṣūr's fierce attack on Sufism was in part a reaction to this alliance. Early during his reign al-Manṣūr composed a sixty-line poem entitled *al-Kāmil al-mutadārik fī bayān madhhab al-ṣūfī al-hālik* together with brief explanatory notes. The poem opens with a complaint about the rejection (*rafḍ*) of Muḥammad's Family by the majority of the Muslim community ever since the death of the Prophet, which has resulted in its split into numerous sects; he then exposes the heresies of the Sufis and in particular accuses them of gross sexual debauchery.⁶¹ He is said to have sent the poem to his son,

⁵⁸ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 58.

⁵⁹ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 58-9; Ibn al-Mu'ayyad, *Ghāyat al-amānī* 680-1.

⁶⁰ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 52-3.

⁶¹ Ms. Brit. Mus. Or. 3851, 101b-105. Al-Manṣūr mentions three Sufi sanctuaries, one of them in the region of Dhamār in which women allegedly acted as prostitutes, and claims that the Yemenite Sufis regularly engaged in a communal sexual orgy lasting three nights

probably Muḥammad, who was then engaged in fighting the Turks. Al-Manṣūr's biographer, al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Jurmūzī quotes another anti-Sufi *Risāla* followed by a *Qaṣīda* which the imam addressed to all the Muslims it could reach. In the *risāla*, as in *al-Kāmil al-mutadārik*, al-Manṣūr describes the Sufis as a sect of the Bāṭiniyya whose religion was founded on the remnants of the Zoroastrians (*mujūs*) when they recognized they could not fight Islam openly. He accuses them of equating their lord with beautiful women and beardless youths while denying the real Lord of the world, and of adopting the singing of love poetry, music, and pleasant diversions as their religion. When they feared for their lives, they would mix exclamations of *lā ilāha illā 'llāh* into these diversions and celebrate the Prophet's birthday (*mawlid al-nabī*) in order to deceive the ignorant. It was the duty of all Muslims to declare licit the shedding of their blood and the seizure of their property because they were infidels and polytheists. Indeed their polytheism was greater than that of the polytheists whom the Prophet had fought in holy war because those had affirmed the existence of God while associating idols as partners with him, whereas these consider only beautiful women and beardless youths as their gods and do not recognize any other lord. In the *Qaṣīda* al-Manṣūr repeats these accusations and calls Muslims to allegiance to the Family of the Prophet.⁶²

The Turks evidently took note of this. Sinān Pasha, then commander of the Ottoman forces in the Yemen and later governor, ordered the sayyid Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh (d. 1008/1599-1600)⁶³, a grandson of Imam Sharaf al-Dīn known as a poet and man of letters (*adīb*), to compose a refutation of the *al-Kāmil al-mutadārik*. Earlier in 994/1586, Sinān's master, the Ottoman governor Ḥasan Pasha, had rounded up the most prominent descendants of Imam Sharaf al-Dīn and deported them to Istanbul. Sayyid Muḥammad was not among them, but he was evidently frightened into submission to Ottoman domination.⁶⁴ He complied with the order by composing a poem in which, besides defending moderate Sufism and the practice of music, he sang the glory of the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet III and

during the month of Rabīʿ al-awwal. Two Sufi works which al-Manṣūr quotes to illustrate objectionable Sufi doctrine are *al-Lumʿa al-nūriyya* (of Abū'l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Būnī, d. 622/1225, GAL i, 497) and *Rayḥān al-qulūb fī 'l-tawassul ilā 'l-maḥbūb* (of Yūsuf b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Kūrānī, GAL, ii 205, the shaykh through whom Ibrāhīm al-Kaynaʿī traced his *silsila*)

⁶² al-Jurmūzī, *al-Nubdha al-mushira* [facsimile edition (Ṣanʿāʾ ca. 1981?)] 31-2.

⁶³ *Ghāyat al-amānī* 782.

⁶⁴ In his response to Sayyid Muḥammad's *qaṣīda*, al-Manṣūr suggested that Sayyid Muḥammad had been compelled by Sinān to write it. *Ḥatf* 2-3.

praised Sinān Pasha as well.

Some time after the death of both Sayyid Muḥammad and Mehmet III, but while Sinān Pasha still held the governorship, al-Manṣūr responded with another poem and a commentary on it entitled *Kitāb Ḥaṭf anṣ al-āfīk fī jawābihi ʿalā ʾl-Kāmil al-mutadārik*.⁶⁵ From the outset, he again pursued the line of accusation that Sufism was derived from Zoroastrianism and Mazdakism, addressing his opponent as:

‘O you who have departed from the religion of the Family of Muḥammad by entering into the Khurramī religion of the Magians’.

(*yā khārijan ʿan dīni āli Muḥammadin bi-dukhūlihīm fī dīni ʾl-mujūsi ʾl-khurmadī*).

In his commentary he explains that the root of the Bāṭiniyya was the religion of the Mujūs and that Khurramdīn, a Persian word, had become a name for them. This was the old accusation against the Ismāʿīliyya that their religion was a Mazdakite conspiracy to undermine Islam — which was now being applied to the Sufis.

By way of justifying his accusation, al-Manṣūr quotes the *Kitāb al-irshād* of ʿAbd Allāh b. Zayd al-ʿAnsī, a prominent Zaydī scholar writing in 632/1234, who had described the Bāṭiniyya, meaning the Ismāʿīliyya, as the most dangerous heresy in Islam founded by descendants of the Mujūs and remnants of the Khurramiyya with the aim of destroying Islam. Some of the Bāṭiniyya had infiltrated the Imāmiyya and the Ṣūfiyya, and had lured them away from Islam. Al-Manṣūr approves of this interpretation and comments that the Ismāʿīliyya, in contrast to the Sufis, were universally condemned by Muslims as infidels, although both groups were equally Bāṭinī. The reason was that the Ismāʿīlīs cursed the Companions of the Prophet, and many religious schools (meaning the Sunnis) were more inclined to get angry at insults to their ancestors than at insults to God. Thus without adverse reaction they would listen to these Sufis proclaiming their doctrine of incarnation and their denial of the prohibitions of God and the Prophet.⁶⁶

Later in his commentary al-Manṣūr quotes at length the fatwas of the Caspian Zaydī imams and scholars against the Bāṭiniyya in which they authorized the execution of Ismāʿīlīs as apostates without allowing the option of repentance.⁶⁷ These fatwas reflected the fierce

⁶⁵ al-Manṣūr’s response is thus to be dated between Mehmet III’s death in 1012/1603 and the end of Sinān’s governorship in 1016/1607.

⁶⁶ *Ḥaṭf* 43-4.

⁶⁷ *Ḥaṭf* 69-74. The text is quoted from al-Manṣūr ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥamza’s *al-Risāla al-ʿĀlima biʾl-adilla al-ḥākima*, published in Madelung, *Arabic Texts concerning the History of*

and bloody conflict between Zaydīs and Ismāʿīlīs in Daylamān and Gilān and were certainly not meant by their authors to be applied to the Sufis with whom they had no serious quarrel. Al-Manṣūr's adroit transfer of them to the Sufis placed the latter in the highly dangerous position of heretics and apostates. Although there is no evidence that these fatwas were actually applied to Sufis in the Yemen, the Sufis certainly felt they were under extreme pressure to conceal their beliefs.

Al-Manṣūr brushes aside the somewhat feeble defense of Sayyid Muḥammad that not all Sufis upheld dancing, incarnation (*ḥulūl*), and union (*ittiḥād*) of the mystic with God, as al-Manṣūr had indiscriminately accused them of doing. In fact moderate Sufis, Sayyid Muḥammad had argued, charged those who followed these doctrines with unbelief. Al-Manṣūr counters that this was the usual manoeuvre of the Bāṭiniyya: whenever they were reproached for their doctrines, they ascribed them to others. Yet one of the learned had already replied to Sayyid Muḥammad's *Qaṣida* pointing out that he had read the *Tāʿiyya* of Ibn al-Fāriḍ, the *Dīwān* of Ibn al-Ḥakkāk, and the writings of Ibn al-ʿArabī only to find they contained the most shocking unbelief. Elsewhere al-Manṣūr singles out for condemnation the *Fuṣūṣ* of Ibn al-ʿArabī, whom he describes as the chief of the incarnationist Sufis (*kabīr al-ṣūfiyya al-ḥulūliyya*). In this work Ibn al-ʿArabī praises idols, justifies all the accursed men who have pretended to divinity such as Pharaoh, and virtually allows all forbidden acts.⁶⁸

In refuting the arguments of his opponent, al-Manṣūr relies on a wide range of citations from Zaydī imams and scholars, as well as on non-Zaydī authors. Thus he quotes at length from anti-Sufi writings of two Zaydī authors active in the time of Imam al-Mutawakkil Sharaf al-Dīn, a response about Sufism by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā b. al-Muẓaffar (d. 925/1519)⁶⁹ and a treatise by the qadī Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā Bahrān (d. 957/1550), probably *al-Kaṣḥf wa'l-bayān fī 'l-radd ʿalā 'l-mubtadiʿa min mutaṣawwifāt al-zamān*.⁷⁰ He quotes the anti-Sufi remarks of the Muʿtazilī Koranic exegete al-Zamakhsharī from the latter's comments on Koran 3/31 and 5/54 and

the Zaydī Imams 163-70.

⁶⁸ *Ḥaṭf* 7.

⁶⁹ For other works by him see *Muʿallafāt* iii, 240, s.v. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ḥamdī.

⁷⁰ *Muʿallafāt* ii, 385. An equally anti-Sufi *dhayl* to Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā Bahrān's treatise was written by Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-Miqrāʾī (d. 990/1582). It is partly extant in Ms. Ambrosiana D 222, 102a-110.

the polemics against alleged Sufi miracles by the sayyid °Abd al-Šamad b. °Abd Allāh al-°Alawī al-Dāmaghānī (tenth/sixteenth century), author of a critical assessment of the doctrines of the various *madhāhib* in Islam.⁷¹ There are long excerpts from an anti-Sufi *Qaṣīda* of the previously mentioned Shāfi°ī scholar Ismā°il al-Muqri,⁷² followed by excerpts from the equally anti-Sufi response to it by the Zaydī sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Hādī b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Murtaḍā (al-Wazīr; d. 822/1419).⁷³

At the end of his treatise al-Manšūr directs his attack against the Turks and the Ottoman sultan in response to Sayyid Muḥammad's eulogy of them. The Turks are the people whose 'faces were like shields covered with skins (*majānn muṭraqa*)', about whose advent the Prophet had warned the Muslims in well-known apocalyptic *ḥadīths*. Pretense to the sultanate (*tasalluṭ*) is not a sign of salvation (*sa°āda*) as Sayyid Muḥammad described it, but rather a sign of damnation (*shaqāwa*). The sultan's possession of the House of God in Mekka was no valid argument for his being the legitimate protector of the Holy Cities. The polytheists and idol worshippers had been able to force the Prophet to emigrate from Mekka, and to prevent him from visiting the Sanctuary. Similarly, the innovations and Sufi practices which the sultan had introduced there were a sign of his damnation rather than his salvation. God had already responded to Sayyid Muḥammad's prayer on behalf of the sultan by causing both Sayyid Muḥammad and Mehmet III to perish. Al-Manšūr concludes his poem by calling upon God to destroy Sinān and to defeat the Turks, and by invoking blessings on the Prophet, his Family and Companions, and forgiveness for himself and the faithful.

Al-Manšūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad's harshly anti-Sufi position set the pattern for the later imams of the Qāsimī dynasty. His son Imam al-Mutawakkil Ismā°il b. al-Qāsim in 1073 or 1074/1662-3 gave the order for Ibn al-°Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* to be burned because of the 'pure unbelief' contained in it.⁷⁴ Not much later Šālih b. Mahdī al-Maqbalī (d. 1108/1696-7) in his *al-°Alam al-shāmikh* observed with

⁷¹ *Ḥaṭf* 46-52. The work of al-Dāmaghānī quoted by al-Manšūr is presumably *al-Jawhara al-khāliṣa °an al-shawā°ib fi 'l-°aqā'id al-manqūma °alā jamī° al-madhāhib, Mu°allafāt* i, 387; GAL, S ii, 966.

⁷² *Ḥaṭf* 52-5. A different anti-Sufi *Qaṣīda* by Ismā°il al-Muqri is quoted by Šālih b. Mahdī al-Maqbalī, *al-°Alam al-shāmikh fi ṭhār al-ḥaqq °alā 'l-ābā° wa'l-mashāyikh* (Cairo 1328/1910) 504-8.

⁷³ On the author see al-Sakhāwī, *al-°aw° al-lāmi°* (Cairo 1353-55/1934-36) x, 206.

⁷⁴ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 60, quoting Ibn al-Mu°ayyad's *Bahjat al-zaman*.

satisfaction that 'God has granted us in the Yemen the extinction of this stuff (Sufism) in the mountains through the action of the imam reigning there. One of the best things he has done there is to prevent swinging and dancing as an amusement, for their (the imams') doctrine entails the proscription of singing'.⁷⁵ Persecution of Sufi orders by the imams continued down to the twentieth century. After the departure of the Ottoman Turks from the coastal regions of the Yemen in 1918, Imam Yaḥyā Ḥamīd al-Dīn (1322-1367/1904-1948) took repressive measure against the Fāsiyya Shādhiliyya brotherhood there, detaining the son of its shaykh as a hostage. Under Yaḥyā's son and successor al-Nāṣir Aḥmad (1367-1382/1948-1962), the shaykh of the brotherhood Muḥammad b. Ḥisān was himself imprisoned and several of his followers were accused of anti-state activities and beheaded. Muḥammad b. Ḥisān died in prison.⁷⁶ Al-Ḥabshī notes that al-Nāṣir Aḥmad ordered the destruction of the tomb of the Sufi shaykh Aḥmad b. °Alwān in Yafrus and of other tombs of Sufis in al-Ḥudayda and Ta°izz.⁷⁷ These actions, however, may have been triggered more by Wahhābī influence than by traditional Zaydī doctrine.

Briefly mentioned may be here the pro-Sunni school within the Zaydiyya which, founded by the sayyid Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr (d. 840/1436), became progressively more influential over time and with Muḥammad b. °Alī al-Shawkānī (d. 1250/1834), chief judge under several imams, came to dominate the religious establishment of the imamate. The school was primarily influenced by Sunni traditionalism, Ḥanbalism and Ibn Taymiyya. Thus for the most part it shared the negative outlook on Sufism of the Shīi Zaydīs. In his *al-°Awāṣim wa'l-qawāṣim fi 'l-dhabb °an sunnat Abī'l-Qāsim*, Ibn al-Wazīr defended other Sunni school doctrines which the Zaydiyya rejected but not Sufism.⁷⁸ The next major representa-

⁷⁵ *Al-°Alam al-shāmikh* 481.

⁷⁶ See F. De Jong, 'Les confréries mystiques musulmanes au Machreq arabe', in A. Popovic et G. Veinstein (eds.), *Les ordres mystiques dans l'islam: Cheminements et situation actuelle* (Paris 1989) 232.

⁷⁷ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 60.

⁷⁸ In the context of his anti-Mu°tazili polemics, Ibn al-Wazīr quotes poetry of the Ṣūfiyya *arbāb al-dhawq wa'l-aḥwāl al-rafi°a* and refers to the spiritual poems (*raqā°iq*) of Ibn al-Fāriḍ with evident admiration [*al-°Awāṣim wa'l-qawāṣim*, ed. Shu°ayb al-Arnā°ūṭī (Amman and Beirut 1405-12/1985-92) vi, 127-9]. While criticizing as baseless Ibn al-°Arabī's arguments in his *Fuṣūṣ* in favour of *ittiḥād* (vii, 107), he praises Shihāb al-dīn °Umar al-Suhrawardī, calling him *al-shaykh al-ṣālīḥ al-°arif al-ṣūfi*, because of his repudiation of the claims of extremist Sufis that they were mere tools of God's action in their violations of the

tive of the school, Ṣāliḥ al-Maqbalī, was, as noted, hostile to Sufism and in his *al-ʿAlam al-shāmikh* quoted many pages of Sunni anti-Sufi polemics, especially against Ibn al-ʿArabī and his school.⁷⁹ Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Amīr (d. 1182/1768-9), a poet and a prolific writer on religious subjects, produced a refutation of the doctrine of the unity of being (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) entitled *Nuṣrat al-maʿbūd fi 'l-radd ʿalā ahl waḥdat al-wujūd*, and denounced this doctrine in others of his writings as well.⁸⁰ A short polemical treatise *Taṭhīr al-iʿtiqād ʿan adrān al-ilḥād*, in which he denounces the veneration of tombs and the false claims to gnostic knowledge by Sufis who disregard the law of the Koran and Sunna has recently been published.⁸¹ Al-Shawkānī, too, shared the general traditionalist aversion to Sufism, although he disapproved of some Wahhābī excesses in criticizing Sufi visitation of saints' tombs. In his youth he wrote a treatise *al-Ṣawārim al-ḥidād al-qāṭiʿa li-ʿalāʾiq arbāb al-ittiḥād* in which he condemned the proponents of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, quoting extensively from Ṣāliḥ al-Maqbalī's *al-ʿAlam al-shāmikh*.⁸² Before his death, however, he retracted his criticism and stated that he now abstained from judging the religious status of the followers of Ibn al-ʿArabī.⁸³

religious law (vii, 140).

⁷⁹ *Al-ʿAlam al-shāmikh* 490-510.

⁸⁰ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 103. According to al-Ḥabshī, the *Nuṣrat al-maʿbūd* is lost.

⁸¹ *Taṭhīr al-iʿtiqād ʿan adrān al-ilḥād*, ed. Muḥammad Ṣubḥī Ḥasan al-Ḥallāq (Ṣanʿāʾ 1411/1990).

⁸² Al-Shawkānī, *al-Ṣawārim al-ḥidād al-qāṭiʿa li-ʿalāʾiq arbāb al-ittiḥād*, ed. Muḥammad Ṣubḥī Ḥasan al-Ḥallāq (Ṣanʿāʾ 1411/1990).

⁸³ al-Ḥabshī, op. cit. 103.

THE WAHHĀBIYYA AND SUFISM IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ESTHER PESKES

Over the last two-hundred-and-fifty years Wahhābism has given rise to a confrontation within Sunni Islam which has found expression partly in violent military campaigns, and partly in emotionally heated discussions leading to a stream of polemical literature that has continued up until today. The outcome of the teachings of the movement's founder, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703-1792), is well-known with regard to Muslim society in the Central Arabian Peninsula: his teachings and his movement, the Wahhābiyya, have resulted in the creation of a new community and state, presently known as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In other parts of the Islamic world the Wahhābiyya has exerted a more purely intellectual influence which has been brought about through a slow process of assimilation by non-Wahhābī scholars of Wahhābī ideas concerning the history and development of Muslim societies.¹

The lasting influence of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb is not only manifest in the ongoing reception and approval of Wahhābī thought, but also in the multiple forms of enmity and refutation which his thought has generated in the past and present. One group which was especially hostile and negative towards the teachings of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb was the Sufis and the Sufi-brotherhoods. Polemical literature emanating from Sufi circles since the eighteenth century has been relatively consistent in its anti-Wahhābī message: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb is a kind of Iblīs and the Wahhābiyya a perennial evil which threatens all Muslims and in particular the Sufi interpretation of Islam.² This is, of course, a one-dimensional view: besides the Wahhābiyya, many other factors have contributed to the changes in Islamic societies since the eighteenth

¹ On this process see the article *Iṣlāḥ* in EI; Werner Ende, 'Religion, Politik und Literatur in Saudi-Arabien: Der geistesgeschichtliche Hintergrund der heutigen religiösen und kulturpolitischen Situation', *Orient* xxii (1981) 377-90; Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* (London-New York 1962) 150, 225 f., 231 f., 344.

² See e.g. Hüseyin Hilmi Işık, *Vehhābīye nasīhat* (Istanbul 1971).

century and account for the decline of Sufism and its institutions.³

Over the course of time, the Wahhābiyya and its relationship with the rest of the Muslim world has evolved. In the eighteenth century Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb claimed to stand alone against the rest of the world, and in this judgement he was quite right. Today the Muslim World League, one of the major international Muslim organizations, is Wahhābiyya-dominated, yet it acts on behalf of Muslims in nearly all Muslim countries throughout the world.⁴

During its two-hundred-and-fifty-year history the Wahhābiyya has had to pass through several stages of success and failure before reaching accommodation with the Sunni Islamic world. Some indications of an inner-Wahhābī development beginning at a relatively early stage in the movement's history are commentaries on the works of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb⁵ and treatises written by his sons and grandsons. Later generations of Wahhābī scholars have added to this corpus of texts.⁶ Historical research on the internal development of Wahhābism is still in its beginnings, and our knowledge of Wahhābī literature remains rather superficial. For this reason sweeping statements concerning the absolute incompatibility of Wahhābism and Sufism should be avoided. The need for a more careful assessment of Wahhābī-Sufi relations is evidenced by the

³ See e.g. Frederick De Jong, 'Die mystischen Bruderschaften und der Volksislam', in Werner Ende and Udo Steinbach (eds.), *Der Islam in der Gegenwart* (Munich 1984) 498.

⁴ For the history of the Muslim World League and recent developments see Reinhard Schulze, *Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Islamischen Weltliga* (Leiden 1990).

⁵ Sulaymān b. ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (d. 1233/1818), *Taysīr al-ʿazīz al-ḥamīd fī sharḥ Kitāb al-tawḥīd* (Beirut 1390/1970); ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1779-1868), *Qurraṭ ʿuyūn al-muwahḥidīn fī taḥqīq daʿwat al-anbiyāʾ waʾl-mursalīn* (Beirut n.d., printed together with Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* and *Fath al-majīd fī sharḥ Kitāb al-tawḥīd* (Cairo 1347/1929). A recent commentary is Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Sulaymān al-Qarʿāwī (1934-), *al-Jadīd fī sharḥ Kitāb al-tawḥīd* (Riyadh, 2nd ed. 1979).

⁶ See the *Majmūʿat al-tawḥīd*, ed. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (Cairo 1346/1928), including treatises by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, Sulaymān b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1751-1826), ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Abā Buṭayn (1780-1865); and also *al-Hadiyya al-saniyya waʾl-tuḥfa al-wahhābiyya al-najdiyya*, ed. Sulaymān b. Saḥmān al-Najdī (Cairo 1342/1923, new edition Mecca 1393/1973), with treatises by ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, ʿAbd al-Latīf b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1810-1876), Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Latīf b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1865-1947); further *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil waʾl-masāʾil al-najdiyya*, iv vols. (Cairo 1346-49/1928-30).

fact that the Wāhhābiyya apparently tolerated the Sufi shaykh Aḥmad b. Idrīs and his followers in Mecca at the beginning of the nineteenth century; Aḥmad b. Idrīs showed sympathy for at least some parts of Wāhhābī dogma and lived the last years of his life in a pro-Wāhhābī milieu in ʿAsīr.⁷ On the other hand, rigorous refutations of Wāhhābī teachings were produced in one mid-nineteenth-century Sufi milieu.⁸ Such contradictions can only be explained on the basis of detailed long-term research on Wāhhābī history and teachings. The present article has a more modest aim, namely to examine the actual teaching of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wāhhāb with regard to his argumentation against Sufism. His writings which will serve as our primary sources consist of a variety of texts: collections of Koranic verses and *ḥadīths* concerning specific subjects (e.g. *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, which is his most famous book), a number of treatises in the form of *rasʾil* (e.g. *Kashf al-shubuhāt*), and an important collection of letters written in the mid-eighteenth century to followers and opponents, mainly in the center of the Arabian Peninsula.⁹ From the bulk of his writings it is evident that Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wāhhāb was not so much a theorist but a scholar concerned with daily life and with polemics and confronting his opponents in Najd.¹⁰

Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wāhhāb was born in the center of the

⁷ R. Seán O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint. Ahmad Ibn Idris and the Idrisi Tradition* (Evanston 1990) 65-9, 104 f.; John Spencer Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (London/New York 1971) 115 f.; Johannes Reissner, 'Die Idrisiden in ʿAsīr. Ein historischer Überblick', *Die Welt des Islams* xxi (1981) 166.

⁸ See the fierce anti-Wāhhābī writings of the Naqshbandī-Khālīdī Shaykh Dāʿūd b. Sulaymān b. Jirjīs al-Baghdādī (1816-82), *Ṣulḥ al-ikhwān min ahl al-imān wa-bayān al-dīn al-qayyim fī tabriʿat Ibn Taymiyya wa-Ibn al-Qayyim* (Bombay 1306/1889, written in 1856); *Risāla fī 'l-radd ʿalā 'l-marḥūm al-Sayyid Maḥmūd Efendī al-Ālūsī* (Bombay 1306/1889); *al-Minḥa al-wahbiyya fī radd al-Wāhhābiyya* (Bombay 1305/1888; reprinted Istanbul 1394/1974); *Ashadd al-jihād fī ibtāl daʿwat al-ijtihād* (Bombay 1305/1888; reprinted Istanbul 1394/1974).

⁹ An attempt at compiling a comprehensive bibliography of his writings in and out of print has been undertaken by Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Dubayb, *Āthār al-Shaykh Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wāhhāb. Sijill bibliyūgrāfi li-mā nushira min muʿallafātihi wa-li-baʿd mā kutiba ʿanhu* (Riyadh 1982); an annotated list of his writings is to be found in ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿUthaymīn, *al-Shaykh Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wāhhāb. Ḥayātuhū wa-fikruhū* (Riyadh, 2nd ed. 1986) 81-111; his letters are published in Ḥusayn Ibn Ghannām, *Taʾrīkh Najd*, ed. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Asad (Beirut, 2nd ed. 1985) 209-393.

¹⁰ On contemporary opposition to his teachings see Esther Peskes, *Muḥammad b. ʿAbdalwāhhāb (1703-92) im Widerstreit. Untersuchungen zur Rekonstruktion der Frühgeschichte der Wāhhābiyya* (Beirut 1993) 49-121.

Arabian Peninsula in a province then called al-^ʿĀriḍ — part of the region of Najd. In this area he lived in the oases al-^ʿUyayna, Ḥuraymilā³ and al-Dir^ʿiyya for most of his life. He also spent a few years travelling which were interrupted by periods of residence in Basra, the oasis of al-Aḥsā³, and at Mecca and Medina. The Ḥanbali *madhhab* of the population of al-^ʿĀriḍ¹¹ was the scholarly tradition in which he had grown up and been educated. His father was a reputed Ḥanbali *qāḍī* from the locally well-known scholarly family Āl Musharraḥ.¹²

Muḥammad b. ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb himself claimed to be independent of any scholarly tradition of his time.¹³ He rejected the authority of his teachers in al-^ʿĀriḍ, embodied primarily in the person of his father, as well as that of others outside al-^ʿĀriḍ.¹⁴ The fact that he frequently quotes from the works of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350) was in no way meant to imply *taqlīd* with regard to these famous authorities — so he himself declares — but was merely intended to strengthen his argumentation.¹⁵ A recurrent theme in anti-Wahhābī polemical writings from the days of Muḥammad b. ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb up to the present maintains that he misread and misunderstood the words of Ibn Taymiyya and that this

¹¹ On the Ḥanbali tradition in al-^ʿĀriḍ see Uwaida M. al-Juhany, *The History of Najd prior to the Wahhabis. A Study of Social, Political and Religious Conditions in Najd during Three Centuries Preceding the Wahhabi Reform Movement* (Ph.D. Diss., Washington 1983) 240-53, and Abdulla M. Mutawa, *The Ulama of Najd. From the Sixteenth Century to the Mid-eighteenth Century* (Ph.D. Diss., Los Angeles 1989).

¹² On his family see al-^ʿUthaymīn, *al-Shaykh Muḥammad b. ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb* 25-7; a summary of his vita is given in the article *Ibn ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb* in EI.

¹³ See Michael Cook, 'On the Origins of Wahhabism', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd series, ii (1992) 202.

¹⁴ Muḥammad b. ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-^ʿāshira*, in Ibn Ghannām 309 f. Apart from Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī, a Medinese scholar, with whom Muḥammad b. ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb is said to have established a short-term pupil-teacher relationship, his teachers were scholars who were otherwise not well-known. Their names are mentioned in Wahhābī sources as ^ʿAbd Allāh b. Ibrāhīm b. Sayf al-Najdī in Medina and Muḥammad al-Majmūʿī in Basra; see Ibn Ghannām 82; and ^ʿUthman Ibn Bishr, *Unwān al-majd fī taʾrīkh Najd* (Mecca 1349/1930-1) i, 7 f. On al-Sindī see John O. Voll, 'Muḥammad Ḥayyā al-Sindī and Muḥammad Ibn ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb: An Analysis of an Intellectual Group in Eighteenth-Century Madīna', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* xxxviii (1975) 32-39.

¹⁵ One of his harshest reactions to the statement that his teachings were simply the '*madhhab* of Ibn Taymiyya' is to be found in Muḥammad b. ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Masʿala al-sādisa*, in Ibn Ghannām 415; for the life and works of Ibn Taymiyya see Henri Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques de Takī-d-dīn Ahmad b. Taimiyya, canoniste Hanbalite né à Harrān en 661/1262, mort à Damas en 728/1328* (Cairo 1939); see *ibid.* 489-92, for information on Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya and EI, s.v. *Ibn Qayyim al-Djawziyya*.

helps to explain the fatal consequences his teachings have had, as far as his opponents are concerned.¹⁶

Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb presumably had personal encounters with Sufism, not only during his travels outside the center of the Arabian Peninsula but also in the countryside where he was born and lived most of his life. On the basis of scattered remarks in his writings, especially in his letters, we may conclude that there were some Sufis in the oases of al-ʿAriḍ whom he attacked along with other groups of the indigenous population. He does not mention any specific Sufi-brotherhoods or names of contemporary Sufis except a certain Ibn ʿAzzāz¹⁷ from one of the oases in Najd whom he suspected of having been a pupil of ʿAbd al-Ghanī known as *al-ʿĀrif bi'llāh* — most probably the famous Damascene Naqshbandī ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī¹⁸ — as well as the names of some Sufis from Maʿkāḷ,¹⁹ such as Wuld Mūsā b. Jawʿān and Salāma b. Mānī.²⁰ People in al-Riyāḍ are described as ‘supporting the *madhhab* of Ibn ʿArabī and Ibn al-Fāriḍ’.²¹ Other persons in his environment remain even more shadowy. He attacks Abū Ḥudayda²² and a certain ʿUthmān for being seducers who have led the common people to belief in others than God, and calls them *kilāb* (dogs). But we do not actually know whether these persons were Sufis or from a Sufi background.²³ A person he mentions only once and simply calls ‘al-ʿAydarūs’²⁴ was probably a member of the Ḥaḍramī ʿAydarūsīyya Sufi-brotherhood. However, his identity as well as his place of

¹⁶ This argument already occurs in the writings of contemporary Ḥanbali opponents of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb; see Peskes, *Muḥammad b. ʿAbdalwahhāb* 81 f., 84, 86-89, 105 f.; then again, in the nineteenth century in the writings of Dāʿūd b. Sulaymān al-Naqshbandī al-Khālidi, *al-Minḥa al-wahbiyya* (Istanbul 1974) 14; and *Ṣulḥ al-ikhwān* 2 ff.; today again, e.g. in the writings of contemporary Turkish Sufi opposition to the Wahhābiyya, see Işık, *Vehhābiye nasihat* 123-78.

¹⁷ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-sābiʿa*, in Ibn Ghannām 284.

¹⁸ For the life and works of al-Nābulusī cf. the articles ‘*Abd al-Ghanī*’ in EI, and *Abdūlgani in Islam Ansiklopedisi*; for further details on his life see also Heribert Busse, ‘*Abd al-Ganī an-Nābulusī’s Reisen im Libanon (1100/1689-1112/1700)*’, *Der Islam* xlv (1968) 71-114.

¹⁹ A place otherwise not mentioned in the sources.

²⁰ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-ʿāshira* 311.

²¹ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Masʿala al-sādisa* 420.

²² Mentioned several times as being a venerated person, e.g. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-ḥādiya waʾl-ʿishrūn*, in Ibn Ghannām 344, 349.

²³ See Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Masʿala al-thāniya waʾl-ʿishrūn*, in Ibn Ghannām 470.

²⁴ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-ḥādiya waʾl-ʿishrūn* 344.

residence remain obscure. And who was the enigmatic 'lame itinerant dervish' (*al-sā'iḥ al-a'raj*), who was leading astray the simple-minded with spurious miracles?²⁵ The sources do not contain an answer to any of these questions.

In other sources too information on Sufism in the milieu of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and Najdī society in the eighteenth century is very scarce. Early Wahhābī historiography mentions destruction by the Wahhābīs of graves and domes built over graves, as well as other sites and buildings.²⁶ The Wahhābīs considered these structures to be places for un-Islamic veneration of saints, prophets and dead persons in general, i.e. for worship of others than God. Yet, these sources do not explicitly mention the destruction of Sufi sites during the early Wahhābī expeditions in the center of the Arabian Peninsula or during the later expeditions in the Ḥijāz. The conquest of al-Ṭāʾif, Mecca and Medina according to the sources did not entail the destruction of specifically Sufi buildings and establishments.

Likewise, in the refutations his contemporary opponents wrote against his teachings one meets with no specifically Sufi/anti-Sufi polemics or discussions. He was, however, accused of having burned the *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt*²⁷ and the *Rawḍ al-rayāḥīn*,²⁸ two books which were widely read in Sufi circles, and presumably in other circles as well.²⁹ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb kept silent about the *Rawḍ al-rayāḥīn*. Concerning the *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt*, he rejected the above accusation, stating that he only advised his followers not to pay attention to this kind of literature because it distracted the faithful from submitting to the word of God, the Koran.³⁰

Thus, the sources do not mention anything which points to a direct confrontation between Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and contemporary Sufis, nor do they provide evidence that Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb especially directed his teachings against Sufis or

²⁵ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-thālitha*, in Ibn Ghannām 245.

²⁶ Ibn Ghannām 84, 182; Ibn Bishr, *ʿUnwān al-majd* i, 9, 122/2, 130, 135.

²⁷ *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt wa-shawāriq al-anwār fī dhikr al-ṣalāt ʿalā ʾl-nabī al-mukhtār*. The author of this book of prayers to the Prophet is the North-African Sufi Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Jazūlī (d. 870/1465); on al-Jazūlī see Trimmingham, *Sufi Orders* 85.

²⁸ *Rawḍ al-rayāḥīn fī ḥikāyāt al-ṣāliḥīn*. The author of this collection of Sufi biographies and hagiography is the Yemenite Sufi ʿAfif al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh al-Yāfiʿī (d. 768/1367); on al-Yāfiʿī see Trimmingham, *Sufi Orders* 273.

²⁹ On this accusation by the Najdī Ibn Suḥaym see Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-sābiʿa* 271.

³⁰ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-thālitha ʿashra*, in Ibn Ghannām 321.

Sufi structures in Najd, al-Aḥsāʾ, Basra or the Ḥaramayn. No actual conflict with contemporary Sufis has overtly shaped his teachings, and no historical figures of Sufism are singled out for special disapproval. Exceptions are Ibn ʿArabī, whom he mentions several times,³¹ and Ibn al-Fāriḍ,³² both of whom he declared to be unbelievers. ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī,³³ Aḥmad al-Badawī,³⁴ and ʿAdī b. Musāfir³⁵ are not themselves attacked, but Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb blames others for venerating them after their death, in line with his general condemnation of visiting and venerating tombs as un-Islamic.³⁶

Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's teachings were not directed against a particular social or religious orientation, such as Sufism, but he did attack the status quo in Islamic societies on a much more fundamental level. He frankly declared that he did not accept *taṣawwuf*, *fiqh* or *kalām*, or anyone of their representatives as at all authoritative:

'I am not calling you to the way of a *ṣūfī* or a *faqīh* or a *mutakallim* or one of the great Imams such as Ibn al-Qayyim, al-Dhahabī, Ibn Kathīr or others. But I am calling you to God alone who has no partners, and I am calling you to the *sunna* of the Prophet which he bequeathed to the first and the last of his *umma*'.³⁷

Nowhere in his writings is Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's obvious rejection of Sufism as detailed as in the case of the demands of the movement known as the 'pre-Wahhābī *fitna*' in Ottoman Cairo in 1711.³⁸ The demands of this short-lived movement express a di-

³¹ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-ʿāshira* 312, 315; *al-Risāla al-sābiʿa* 280, 284; *al-Risāla al-rābiʿa*, in Ibn Ghannām 254; *al-Masʿala al-sādisa* 420.

³² Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-ʿāshira* 312, 315; on ʿUmar b. al-Fāriḍ (d. 1235) see Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina 1978) 274 ff., and Th. Emil Homerin, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint. Ibn al-Fāriḍ, his Verse, and his Shrine* (Columbia, South Carolina 1994).

³³ On ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 1166), founder of the Qādiriyya order, see EI, s.v. *ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Djīlānī*; for the veneration practices at his tomb see Constance Padwick, *Muslim Devotions* (London 1961) 240-2.

³⁴ For Aḥmad al-Badawī (d. 1276), founder of the Badawiyya order, see EI, s.v. *Aḥmad al-Badawī*; Trimmingham, *Sufi Orders* 45, 79; Ignaz Goldziher, *Veneration of Saints in Islam*, in Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, ed. S. M. Stern (London 1969-71) ii, 307-310.

³⁵ For ʿAdī b. Musāfir (d. 1162) see EI, s.v. *ʿAdī b. Musāfir*.

³⁶ This would be the same as if one blamed ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib for the Rāfiḍa. See e.g. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Masʿala al-thāniya wa'l-ʿishrūn* 468; *al-Risāla al-sābiʿa* 277, 280, 281; and *al-Masʿala al-sādisa ʿashra*, in Ibn Ghannām 454.

³⁷ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-ūla*, in Ibn Ghannām 211.

³⁸ Barbara Flemming, 'Die vorwahhabitische fitna im osmanischen Kairo 1711', in

rect attack on the Sufi institutions, practices and beliefs which were prevalent in the contemporary Cairene Sufi milieu.³⁹ The demands included the abolition of the *tekkes* of the Gülshenīs, Mevlevīs and Bektāshīs and their conversion into *madrāsas* for instruction in the religious sciences; prohibition of *dhikr* at the tombs of al-Shāfi‘ī and other *shuyūkh*; and prohibition of *dhikr* at Bāb Zuwayla during the nights of Ramaḍān. The movement rejected the belief that saints could perform miracles after their death, and considered any reports of such miracles, such as those in al-Sha‘rānī’s *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, as absolutely false.⁴⁰ Moreover, veneration of shrines, expressed by kissing the shrines or the sarcophagus, or by lighting candles and lamps, is seen as unbelief. Constructions over tombs and any decoration on graves should be destroyed.⁴¹ Only this last category of demands concerning the veneration of shrines recurs some thirty years later as a central element in Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s teachings.

The Cairene ‘pre-Wahhābī *fitna*’ was essentially a short-lived socio-religious outburst against a well-established Sufi milieu. Its focus was local. It was at once suppressed by the authorities and in the end proved to be of no lasting consequence. The teachings of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, however, aimed at changes in Islamic societies at large: they succeeded in exerting new ethical pressure on all his Muslim contemporaries, Sufis and non-Sufis alike, *khāṣṣa* and ‘*amma*. The result was a widespread movement of desacralization of the public sphere and a new orientation in Islam.

The veneration of shrines was a ubiquitous phenomenon in the Muslim world (as in numerous other religions⁴²) and its manifestations were perhaps as diversified as the tombs’ locations and the number of their occupants. Shrine veneration constituted an institutional setting intricately linked with Islamic worship. In this setting various religious traditions coincided or intersected with each other. One of these was mystical Islam with its veneration of the *awliyā’*³

Ismail Hakki Uzunçarsılıl’ya Armağan (Ankara 1976) 55-65; on the same subject see also the article of Rudolph Peters, ‘The Battered Dervishes of Bāb Zuwayla. A Religious Riot in Eighteenth-Century Cairo’, in Nehemia Levtzion and John O. Voll (eds.), *Eighteenth-Century Renewal and Reform in Islam* (New York 1987) 93-115.

³⁹ Flemming, ‘Fitna’ 59 f.; Peters, ‘Dervishes’ 94 f..

⁴⁰ Flemming, ‘Fitna’ 59 f..

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² For tomb veneration in the Christian tradition see Arnold Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien. Die Geschichte ihres Kultes vom frühen Christentum bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich 1994) 132-7 and passim.

allāh ('the friends of God' or 'saints'). Other traditions belong to a more diffuse sphere which for want of a better term is often referred to as 'folk-religiosity', i.e. a variety of religiously motivated forms of conduct, connected with countless local customs, not bound by dogma but arising from the needs of daily life of the pious.⁴³

However diverse the coinciding traditions, the practice of veneration always aimed primarily at effecting contact with the sacred sphere and at reducing or bridging the gap between God and Man. A Sufi might engage in venerating the tomb of a great Sufi shaykh in order to benefit from the latter's *baraka* and to draw closer to God; a non-Sufi believer might visit and venerate a tomb in the hope that his wants would be provided for by means of the saint's intercession. Veneration of the Prophet, of one of his relatives, of one of the *ṣaḥāba* or *tābi'ūn*, of persons held to be *ṣāliḥūn*, or of a dead Sufi shaykh in his tomb, in each case aimed at obtaining merit and help, both in this world and the world to come.

In his teachings, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb did not differentiate between Sufi practices and the manifold diffuse forms of 'folk religiosity'. The term he used to denote the manifestations of piety and religious feelings connected with shrine veneration was *al-i'tiqād fī'l-anbiyā' wa'l-ṣāliḥīn*. To him all this implied manifestations of *kufr*: 'Believing in the pious (*al-i'tiqād fī'l-ṣāliḥīn*)... is idolatry (*ʿibādat al-aṣnām*) and whoever engages in this is an unbeliever (*man fa'alahū kafara*)',⁴⁴ and: 'Touching the graves or visiting them with the intention of invoking (the dead) do not belong to the religion of the Muslims'.⁴⁵

Muḥammad b. Abd al-Wahhāb's opposition to any sort of shrine veneration led to the well-known destruction by the Wahhābis of single tombs, buildings like mosques or domes erected over burial sites, or even whole cemeteries, whether these were Sunni or Shiite, Sufi or non-Sufi places.⁴⁶ The destruction of tombs and shrines was

⁴³ See the criticism of the term 'folk-Islam' or 'folk-religiosity' in De Jong, 'Die mystischen Bruderschaften' 489 ff.

⁴⁴ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Masʿala al-thāniya wa'l-ʿishrūn* 471.

⁴⁵ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Masʿala al-sādisa ʿashra* 455.

⁴⁶ For examples see Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, *Reisen in Arabien, enthaltend eine Beschreibung derjenigen Gebiete des Hedjaz, welche die Mohammedaner für heilig achten* (Weimar 1830, reprint of German translation of English original) 122, 166, 188, 252-6, 440, 459 f., 509 f., 526 f., 550-3, 555; on tombs in al-ʿAriḍ destroyed by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb himself see Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-sābi'a* 288; on the destruction of the shrine of al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib at Karbalā' in 1802 see Ibn Bishr i, 121.

only one of the more visible and spectacular results of his analysis and criticism of present and past Muslim societies. The Wahhābīs ever thereafter remained associated with these acts of destruction; it is one of the first things which come to mind whenever the name ‘Wahhābiyya’ is mentioned. Yet, the impact and continuity of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb’s doctrinal position underlying his categorical rejection of saints, shrines and the practice of veneration, is more significant than the physical destruction of shrines which he inspired or engaged in personally.

Central to this position is his conception of the various dimensions of *tawḥīd*. In this regard, he distinguishes between *tawḥīd al-rubūbiyya*, *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* and *tawḥīd al-ṣifāt*. One of these dimensions, *tawḥīd al-ṣifāt*, i.e. the believer’s affirmation of the unity of God’s attributes mentioned in the Koran, is the least developed dimension of *tawḥīd* and is seldom mentioned in Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb’s writings.⁴⁷ On the other hand, the concept of *tawḥīd al-rubūbiyya*, affirmation that God is the omnipotent Lord of the world, and the concept of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya*, the confirmation of the previous form of *tawḥīd* through deeds and in particular by worshipping God alone, are crucial to the way Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb has worked out his doctrinal positions. Indeed, the *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* is clearly the most decisive of these two. Its fulfilment or non-fulfilment constitutes the difference between faith and infidelity, between *islām* and *kufr*.⁴⁸ In this context Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb writes:

‘*Tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya*, oh mankind, includes your actions such as invocation (*duʿāʾ*), fear (*khawf*), hope (*rajāʾ*), trust in God (*tawakkul*), repentance (*ināba*), desire (*raghba*), respect/fear (*rahba*), making a vow (*nadhr*) and beseeching help (*istighātha*), and other forms [of behaviour] to do with divine worship (*ʿibāda*).⁴⁹

All these feelings and actions along with others such as performing sacrifice (*dhabḥ*), begging forgiveness (*istighfār*) or seeking intercession (*shafāʿa*),⁵⁰ when not addressed to God Himself but to

⁴⁷ E.g. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Masʿala al-thāmina*, in Ibn Ghannām 432; and a discussion of this category including also later Wahhābī writings in al-ʿUthaymīn, *al-Shaykh Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb* 128-133.

⁴⁸ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Jawāhir al-muḍīʾa*, in *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil waʾl-masāʾil al-najdiyya* iv, 2 f.; *Risāla ukhrā fī kalimat al-tawḥīd* 37.

⁴⁹ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-khāmiṣa fī talqīn uṣūl al-ʿaqida liʾl-ʿamma biʾl-asʾila waʾl-ajwiba*, in *Majmūʿat al-tawḥīd* 119.

⁵⁰ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-thāniya*, in Ibn Ghannām 228.

human beings, be they dead or alive, be they prophets or not prophets, Sufis or not Sufis, are the opposite of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* and constitute idolatry and unbelief.

'But the greatest idolatry (*al-shirk al-akbar*), the worship of idols (*'ibādat al-aṣnām*) [is the following]: One man goes to the tomb of a prophet, another man to the tomb of a Companion of the Prophet such as Zubayr or Ṭalḥa, another to the tomb of a pious man, another invokes him in distress not visiting the grave, another makes vows to him, another sacrifices to the *jinn*, another asks [a prophet, a Companion of the Prophet, or a pious man] for help against the hardships of this world and the hereafter, and another begs him for good fortune here and now and in the world to come. All this is *shirk*, and the worship of idols and anyone who practices it stands outside Islam'.⁵¹

The definition of the contents of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* — the profession of God's unity through deeds — became essentially a catalogue of negative forms of behaviour from which a believer must abstain. In order to fulfill *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* it was of crucial importance to abstain from any forms of worship, veneration or belief in someone or something besides God. Thus, if a person pronounced an oath in the name of someone other than God, believed in the power of a talisman or an amulet, sacrificed to someone other than God, visited tombs and graves and performed ceremonies at these locations, he was far from fulfilling *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya*. Any of the above behaviour, according to Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb, clearly revealed that God alone was not being worshipped and venerated but that many other powers and persons were being wrongly accredited with a kind of sacred superhuman capacity. All such beliefs and actions, which Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb describes at length, were the irrefutable proof that a person was not fulfilling *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* but committed *shirk* and therefore stood outside Islam.

The precepts for fulfilling *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* were simple but with a far-reaching impact on daily life and social relationships: living in conformity with *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* not only entailed abstaining from anything which infringed on God's absolute oneness, but also entailed the obligation to assess one's fellow-men and to combat all those who did not live according to the precepts and prohibitions by which this form of God's oneness was defined and circumscribed.⁵²

⁵¹ Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-thālitha* 244 f..

⁵² See Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Risāla ukhrā fī kalimat al-tawḥīd* 37; *al-Mas'ala al-thālitha*, in Ibn Ghannām 405 f.; *al-Risāla al-'āshira* 311; *al-Risāla al-sādisa wa'l-'ishrūn*,

The state of the faith — so argued Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb — was by no means better in the twelfth century A.H. than at the time when God's law was first revealed. On the contrary, the faith was now far worse, because various forms of worshipping and venerating others than God had proliferated to such a degree that even persons entirely unworthy of respect were taken as authorities in addition to God.⁵³ Following this line of argument, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb especially attacked the persons we identified above as belonging to the shadowy Sufi milieu in the oases of al-ʿĀrid. These were persons, who according to him, only strove after money and worldly possessions, pretended to have miraculous powers and seduced others to venerate shrines which thrived from lucrative ceremonies they practiced.⁵⁴

In only one period in Islamic history had the faith been maintained according to God's will as revealed to mankind by the Prophet Muḥammad. That was the time of the Prophet himself, his Companions and the Followers, i.e. the early days of the Islamic community. Only by purifying the faith of historical accretions of arbitrary human practices, could the community return to the path of salvation on which the early Muslims had been rightly guided.⁵⁵ Whatever else might be subject to change, the faith was not. The faith was one for all times, always the same; and the Koran and *sunna* were as binding for the Muslim of the twelfth century A.H. as they had been in early Islamic times, in the age of pure faith.⁵⁶

The religious and political elites of society: ʿulamāʾ, *fuqahāʾ*, *mutakallimūn*, and Sufi *shuyūkh*, as well as rulers who with their help established and maintained un-Islamic regimes, were responsible for the present unacceptable situation.⁵⁷ Their instruments (of power), the *madhāhib*, their science of *fiqh* and their *fiqh*-compendia, must be replaced by the Koran and *sunna* as the sole guarantee for a life according to the will of God.⁵⁸ This meant that the creation

in Ibn Ghannām 372.

⁵³ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-thālitha* 244.

⁵⁴ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-sābiʿa* 280 f.; *al-Masʿala al-sādisa* 413 f., 416; *al-Risāla al-tāsiʿa*, in Ibn Ghannām 300.

⁵⁵ See e.g. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Risāla al-ūlā* 217 f.

⁵⁶ For his idealization of the early Muslim community see Peskes, *Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb* 43-6.

⁵⁷ Disobedience to un-Islamic authorities was incumbent on the true believer; see Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* 123 and *Kashf al-shubuhāt*, in *Majmūʿat al-tawḥīd* 77.

⁵⁸ On the pre-eminence of the Koran and *sunna* see also al-ʿUthaymīn, *al-Schaykh*

of a new community was a primary duty, the corollary of which was the abolition of all hierarchies and authorities which were engaged in maintaining the unlawful and un-Islamic system.

These were the primary ideas which constituted the intellectual foundation for Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's new Islamic community which conceived of itself as being in possession of the one true faith and automatically excluded and fought against all others who did not conform to its interpretation. The development and spread of this community were not without difficulties. The proclaimed necessity to abolish established political and religious authorities would create the preconditions for a new political power to arise. In 1745 Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb obtained the support of the local *raʾīs* of the oasis of al-Dirʿiyya, Muḥammad b. Saʿūd, but this did not result in immediate success. The history of the early Wahhābī movement, which led to the establishment of the First Wahhābī State, is a history of military campaigns and propaganda activity to win over all the oases of al-ʿĀriḍ and the adjacent provinces in Central Najd.⁵⁹ Only in the last quarter of the eighteenth century did the movement become a power of regional importance extending beyond the local boundaries. By the beginning of the nineteenth century it had obtained a degree of influence which attracted the attention of Muslims outside the Arabian Peninsula. The conquest of the Ḥijāz and the Ḥaramayn in the first decade of the nineteenth century obliged the whole Islamic world to take Wahhābism seriously.⁶⁰ The expansion of the Wahhābī movement implied the spread of Wahhābī teaching. This teaching undoubtedly elicited different responses from various social and religious groups, which adhered to other conceptions of Islam. Our knowledge of Wahhābī responses to the challenges posed by groups such as nomads, semi-nomads, sedentaries, townspeople, villagers, Arabs and non-Arabs, local elites and common people, Sufis and *fuqahāʾ*, is defective.

Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb 147, and Bakrī Shaykh Amīn, *al-Ḥaraka al-adabiyya fī 'l-mamlaka al-ʿarabiyya al-saʿūdiyya* (Beirut, 6th ed. 1994) 51; a summary of his arguments against the *madhāhib* and *fiqh* in Peskes, *Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb* 33-44.

⁵⁹ For a case study on the Wahhābī expansion in Central Najd and the slow spread of Wahhābī power through military and propagandistic efforts see Michael Cook, 'The Expansion of the First Saudi State: The Case of Washm', in Clifford E. Bosworth, Charles Issawi et al. (eds.), *The Islamic World. From Classical to Modern Times. Essays in Honour of Bernard Lewis* (Princeton 1991) 661-699, esp. 669, 673, 675.

⁶⁰ For a survey of the expansion of the first Wahhābī state see ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿUthaymīn, *Taʾrikh al-mamlaka al-ʿarabiyya al-saʿūdiyya* (n.p. 1984) i, 93-168.

Yet, Wahnābī control of the public domain had an effect on all of them, and the form this control took is relatively well-documented, in particular in Wahnābī and anti-Wahnābī sources which deal with the Wahnābī conquest of the Hijāz. These sources document the widespread destruction of tombs and graveyards,⁶¹ already mentioned above, the destruction of books to do with all categories of knowledge,⁶² enforced instruction in the teachings of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahnāb,⁶³ the imposition of the observance of the daily prayers,⁶⁴ and hindrance of the annual *hajj*, especially the pilgrim caravans coming by way of Syria and Egypt.⁶⁵ The justification for this radical action was that the behaviour of the majority of pilgrims demonstrated that they were not Muslims and consequently they were prohibited from entering the Ḥaramayn.⁶⁶

Wahnābī control of the public sphere profoundly affected all who were living under their rule. Wahnābism monopolized knowledge: writings which deviated from the Wahnābī conceptions of *tawḥīd* were prohibited or destroyed, the institutionalized framework of the *madhāhib* was dismantled.⁶⁷ Religious and legal instruction in mosques, *madrasas* and other institutions was administered by Wahnābī teachers in conformity with Wahnābī writings. Likewise, Wahnābism abolished the plurality of public manifestations of the faith and imposed rigid uniformity. The mosque became the sole location where the religious feelings of the pious were allowed to manifest themselves. The shrines of saints and any setting for the mediation of divine grace and salvation were closed and/or dismantled. Any ceremonies accompanying the veneration of saints (e.g. the *mawlid*s)⁶⁸ or the veneration of living human beings such as

⁶¹ Ibn Bishr, *ʿUnwān al-majd* i, 122/2, 135; Aḥmad b. Zaynī Daḥlān, *Khulāṣat al-kalām fi umarāʾ al-balad al-ḥarām* (Beirut n.d.) 302-3.

⁶² Aḥmad b. Zaynī Daḥlān, *al-Durar al-saniyya fi ʾl-radd ʿalā ʾl-wahnābiyya* (Cairo n.d.) 144 f., and *Khulāṣat al-kalām* 297 ff.

⁶³ Ibid. 302.

⁶⁴ Ibn Bishr, *ʿUnwān al-majd* i, 141, 151, 157; John Lewis Burckhardt, *Notes on the Bedouins and Wahābys* (Beirut 1992, reprint of the first edition of 1831) 101.

⁶⁵ Ibn Bishr *ʿUnwān al-majd* i, 117, 141; Daḥlān, *Khulāṣat al-kalām* 326.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 326.

⁶⁷ The *madhāhib* reflected *ikhtilāf al-ʿulamāʾ* which Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahnāb vehemently condemned; see *al-Masʿala al-sābiʿa*, in Ibn Ghannām 421, 425, 427; *fiqh* and *fiqh*-compendia had to be subjected to the Koran and *sunna*; *ibid.* 424.

⁶⁸ For Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahnāb's negative attitude towards *mawlid*-ceremonies see *al-Risāla al-sābiʿa* 281; *al-Risāla al-tāsiʿa* 300.

the *sāda* ⁶⁹ were prohibited as being *shirk* or leading to *shirk*.

Not only relationships between living human beings, but also those between the living and the dead were redefined. The dead, including the Prophet,⁷⁰ were declared to have entered *barzakh*, where they awaited the day of Resurrection without being able to help the living through any form of intercession. The believer was left on his own with the prescribed duties towards God and only the fulfilment of these duties could help him attain salvation.

Wahhābism, in its early stages, confronted Sufism primarily at the level of popular practice and daily routines. Discourse was not carried out on the level of sophisticated theological argumentation. The Sufi system of thought, as well as the varied organizational structures of the Sufi-brotherhoods, ran counter to Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's conception of the Muslim community based on immutable uniformity of faith and the absolute transcendence of God. The Sufi *shuyūkh* disappeared from the public sphere and their authority was pretty much eradicated. Veneration for such persons, living or dead, and the characteristic 'blind' obedience accorded by the *murīd* to his *murshid* were viewed as *shirk* and expressions of unbelief. The Sufi institution of *rābiṭa*⁷¹ based on an intimate tie with a shaykh possessing *baraka*, the general Sufi claim of a special relationship with the Prophet through a *silsila*, and the veneration of the tombs of Sufi saints and other pious persons, which is one of the most visible public manifestations of Sufi practices, were all condemned as sheer *kufr*. Actions which aimed at eradicating these practices and beliefs implied tearing up the very roots from which Sufism sprang. Wahhābism made the physical existence of the Sufi-brotherhoods impossible and even threatened the transmission of their spiritual heritage outside the Arabian Peninsula, since Wahhābism provided an example for anti-Sufi movements to follow throughout Sunni Islam.

⁶⁹ E.g. special reverence paid to the *sāda* as descendants of the Prophet; see *al-Risāla al-sābiʿa* 272; *al-Risāla al-sābiʿa ʿashra* 331 f.

⁷⁰ See Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* 105-7; in *al-Risāla al-thāniya* 228 he says: 'the prophets have no special rank with God'; *al-Risāla al-thāminiya fī 'l-uṣūl al-thalātha al-wājiba ʿalā kull muslim wa-muslima*, in *Majmūʿat al-tawḥīd* 127 f.; al-Uthaymīn, *al-Shaykh Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb* 167; cf. also Burckhardt's observations concerning the Wahhābī assessment of the Prophet both as prophet and as a mortal human being, *Notes* 102.

⁷¹ On *rābiṭa* see Fritz Meier, *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Naqṣbandiyya* (Istanbul 1994) 17-241.

Traces of specific Sufi-Wahhābī confrontation in the sources documenting the early stage of Wahhābī history are few and do not indicate serious direct conflict. Sufi institutions in the center of the Arabian Peninsula (in al-^ʿĀrid and the neighbouring provinces) would have been too weak to offer much resistance to Wahhābism; the lack of any reference in the sources to damage done to Sufi establishments or persecuted Sufis in central Najd bears out this impression. Nevertheless, during the first Wahhābī occupation of the Ḥijāz and the Ḥaramayn, great damage was done to tombs and graveyards in the Holy Places. Because of the numerous tombs and sacred places and because of the annual *hajj*, several Sufi-brotherhoods had been established here. It is reported, however, that Sufis and certain Sufi-brotherhoods survived under a polity which was opposed to Sufism during the short period of less than a decade at the beginning of the nineteenth century. These brotherhoods were thriving in the Ḥijāz, especially in Mecca, at the end of the nineteenth century.⁷²

Western scholars often claim emphatically that Wahhābism is a kind of neo-Ḥanbalism. More particularly, Wahhābī thought is presented as an elaboration of the teachings of Ibn Taymiyya, whom these scholars are prepared to quote as authoritative when the actual writings of Muḥammad b. ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb do not provide answers to their questions.⁷³ However, research has shown that Ḥanbalīs could also be Sufis, while even Ibn Taymiyya himself was a member of a Sufi-brotherhood, the Qādiriyya.⁷⁴ On the other hand, no follower of Wahhābism was ever publicly affiliated with Sufism. What Muḥammad b. ^ʿAbd al-Wahhāb achieved through his teachings was endowed with a new dimension, even if their doctrinal roots undeniably grew out of Ḥanbalism: he succeeded in establishing a

⁷² See Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*. ii: *Aus dem heutigen Leben* (Den Haag 1889) 277-90.

⁷³ See e.g. the chapter 'De Wahhabieten en de mystiek' in Roelof W. van Diffelen, *De Geloofsleer der Wahhabieten* (Leiden 1927) 52-72.

⁷⁴ Cf. George Makdisi, 'L'islam ḥanbalisant. iii: Soufisme et ḥanbalisme', *Revue des études islamiques* xliii (1975) 57 f.; for other Ḥanbalīs who had been Sufis see the same article, 59; in this context see also G. Makdisi, 'Ibn Taymiyya: A ṣūfī of the Qādiriyya order', *American Journal of Arabic Studies* i (1973) 118-29; Fritz Meier 'Das sauberste über die vorbestimmung. Ein stück Ibn Taymiyya', *Saeculum* xxxii (1981) 79, n. 9, rejects Makdisi's argument that Ibn Taymiyya had been a Sufi.

specific definition of the faith, one which entails a comprehensive conception of Islamic knowledge, obligatory action and individual responsibility to the complete exclusion of Sufism and its institutions.

KRITIK AM NEO-SUFISMUS

BERND RADTKE

Trägt man über die islamische mystik vor einem breiteren publikum vor, das aus hörern aus der islamischen welt und dem westen bestehen kann, so begegnet man bei einer anschliessenden diskussion immer wieder einem urteil — man kann fast von einem klischee sprechen: Die islamischen mystiker, die sufis, sehen sich oder stehen in opposition zum offiziellen “orthodoxen” islam durch ihre nichtbeachtung der regeln und vorschriften des heiligen gesetzes, der sharia. Stellt man die richtigkeit dieses urteils in frage, so begegnet man zumeist ungläubigem staunen, ja geradezu einem widerwillen. Auf den hiermit angesprochenen fragenkomplex soll nicht weiter eingegangen werden. Ich denke jedoch nicht ganz falsch zu liegen, wenn ich behaupte, dass die polemiken auf diesem gebiet nur einem “nebenkriegsschauplatz” gelten, also gefechte ausgetragen werden, die die aufmerksamkeit und die reflexion über weit bedeutenderes und grundsätzlicheres geradezu behindern.¹

Ich brauche nicht zu betonen, dass ich nicht die relative gültigkeit des klischees bestreite. Aber sehr viel grundsätzlicher scheinen mir, was die gegenüberstellung sufik — normaler islam betrifft, fragen zu sein, die ich in einem grösseren rahmen aufwerfen möchte.

Das göttliche gesetz ist geoffenbart worden, um in der welt, im staatlichen, gesellschaftlichen leben zur anwendung zu kommen. Alles was Gott der welt und speziell der muslimischen gemeinde hierüber mitteilen wollte, ist bis zum tode des profeten Muḥammad an die welt ergangen. Damit war die göttliche offenbarung ein für allemal beendet, sie ist versiegt.² Dass das zunächst, im 1.-2. jh. der hidschra, noch nicht allgemein akzeptiert wurde, soll nicht näher interessieren.³ Das heil der post-Muḥammad-gemeinde und des einzel-

¹ Vgl. dazu auch Bernd Radtke, ‘Warum ist der Sufi orthodox?’, *Der Islam* lxxi (1994) 302-307.

² Dazu Fritz Meier, ‘Das sauberste über die vorsehung. Ein stück Ibn Taymiyya’, *Saeculum* xxxii (1981) 75 f.; auch veröffentlicht in Fritz Meier, *Bausteine. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Islamwissenschaft*, i-iii (Istanbul-Stuttgart 1992) ii, 697 f.

³ Josef van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra. Eine*

nen hing von der richtigen auslegung und anwendung des gesetzes ab. Damit ist die frage des imamats, der autorität zur leitung der gemeinde, angesprochen, worauf bekanntlich verschiedene antworten gegeben wurden. Die mehrheitslösung ist die sogenannte sunnitische: Der kalif, der aus dem stamm des profeten kommen sollte, aber nicht aus der familie selbst, wie nach schiitischer ansicht, sichert zusammen mit den gelehrten, den *‘ulamā’*, die rechte auslegung und praxis des heiligen gesetzes. Die gelehrten sind die eigentlichen erben des profeten: *al-‘ulamā’ warathat al-anbiyā’*.⁴ Ihre gesetzesauslegung erfolgt durch die betätigung der kräfte der vernunft, die ein “normales” bewusstsein zur grundlage haben, sowie normale sinnes-tätigkeit, normale wahrnehmung.

Uneinigkeit herrschte darüber, welche rolle der individuellen urteilkraft im einzelnen fall *hic et nunc* zugestanden werden durfte, und welche der von den vorgängern übernommene brauch, der zwar auch durch die tätigkeit der vernunft begriffen, aber eben nicht durch das individuelle schlussverfahren gefunden wird. Höchstes ziel musste es sein, im individuellen fall zur erkenntnisgewissheit (*yaqīn*)⁵ zu gelangen. Dass die normale, allgemeine verstandes- und sinnestätigkeit diese nicht verschaffen kann, war die überzeugung der schiitischen gruppen, die darum als höchste rechtsprechungsautorität den göttlich inspirierten imam setzten, dessen inspiration durch seine leibliche abstammung vom profeten gegeben war.

Auch eine andere gruppe wollte nicht die vernunft als letzte rechtsfindungsinstanz anerkennen: die mystiker, seit dem 4./10. jh. allgemein sufis genannt. Ihre position wird im klassischen handbuch der sufik, den *Luma’* des Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (gest. 378/988), so beschrieben: “(Religiöses) wissen ist entweder ein vers des korans, ein heiliger bericht vom gesandten Gottes oder eine weisheit, durch sinnerschliessung gefunden, die dem herz eines gottesfreundes einfällt.”⁶ Koran und sunna sind die grundlage des äusseren wissens, das der gelehrte überliefert oder das ihm überliefert wird, und das er durch vernunftbetätigung begreift. Sie sind die grundlagen des äusseren wissens, des *‘ilm al-ẓāhir*, wie bereits in traktaten des 3./9. jh.s formuliert wird. Der mystiker verwirft oder übertritt

Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam, i-vi (Berlin-New York 1991-1997) i, 3-6.

⁴ Richard Gramlich, *Schlaglichter über das Sufitum. Abū Naṣr as-Sarrāḡs Kitāb al-luma’*, eingeleitet, übersetzt und kommentiert (Stuttgart 1990) 39 f.

⁵ Josef van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre des ‘Aḡudaddīn al-Īcī* (Wiesbaden 1966), passim.

⁶ Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-Luma’ fi’l-taṣawwuf*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (Leiden-London 1914) 6, 1-3/Gramlich, *Schlaglichter* 40.

selbstverständlich nicht die vorschritten des äusseren wissen — ich erinnere an die zu beginn getroffenen feststellungen. Aber er will ein “mehr”. Und dieses erreicht er durch innere aktivität, die ihn zu einer, wie er meint, “höheren” art der wissenschaft führen kann: dem wissen des inneren, der wissenschaft des inneren, *‘ilm al-bāṭin*.⁷ Das ist ein erhöhtes, geschärftes bewusstwerden der eigenen seelentätigkeiten: die im 3./9. jh. vor allem in den schriften al-Muḥāsibīs (gest. 857) und al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhīs (gest. ca. 910)⁸ herausgearbeitete kunst der introspektion. Die innere aktivität zielt auf die erziehung der seele, des niederen ichs, die zurückdrängung und endliche auslöschung der eigenen aktivitäten. Das führte zur unio mystica, erlebt als verlöschen (*fanāʾ*) in Gott. Dass bisweilen die unio durch ekstase gesucht wurde, die äusserungen und verhaltensweisen zeitigen konnte, die die grenzen der sharia verletzten — das soll hier nicht näher beachtet werden.⁹

Es war jetzt Gott, der durch den mystiker wirkte, dachte und urteilte: daher besass dieser dann auch erkenntnisgewissheit. Er war der wahre wissende, der wahre erbe des profeten, der einzig legitimierte ausleger des heiligen gesetzes: *warathat al-anbiyāʾ al-awliyāʾ*. Sein durch innere aktivität entstandenes wissen konnte bereichert werden durch göttliche begnadungen: göttliche inspiration (*ḥadīth*), heilsversicherungen (*bushrā*), wahrträume — von vielen als teil der profetie angesehen —, schliesslich die fähigkeit wunder zu verrichten.¹⁰ Im wahrtraum konnte dem mystiker der profet Muḥammad begegnen,¹¹ der ihm erhöhte gewissheit in den fragen der gesetzesauslegung zu geben vermochte.

⁷ Eliran, s.v. *Bāṭen*; Bernd Radtke, ‘Theologen und Mystiker in Ḥurāsān und Transoxanien’, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* cxxxvi (1986) 559 f.; Bernd Radtke & John O’Kane, *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism* (London 1996) u.a. 42/Bernd Radtke, *Drei Schriften des Theosophen von Tirmid̄, Zweiter Teil: Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Beirut-Stuttgart 1996) 13; Radtke, ‘Warum’ 304 f.

⁸ Zur biografie und zum todesdatum Tirmidhīs vgl. Bernd Radtke, *Al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmid̄. Ein islamischer Theosoph des 3./9. Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg 1980) 1-38; Radtke & O’Kane, *Concept* 1-13; Radtke, *Drei Schriften* 1-8. — Ich erlaube mir die bemerkung, dass es erfreulich wäre, wenn meine “chronologischen versuche” zum leben al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhīs zumindest zur kenntnis genommen würden; dazu auch *Drei Schriften*, Vorwort.

⁹ Für den fall *al-Ḥallāj* verweise ich auf die grundlegenden äusserungen Fritz Meiers in seinem artikel ‘Ein wichtiger handschriftenfund zur ṣūfik’, *Oriens* xx (1967) 104 f./Bausteine i, 320 f.). Dieser artikel wird demnächst auch in englischer übersetzung zugänglich sein (Fritz Meier, *Essays on Islamic Piety and Mysticism*).

¹⁰ Dazu Radtke & O’Kane, *Concept*, passim; Index of Arabic and Persian Words, s.vv. *ḥadīth*, *bushrā*, *karāmāt*, *ruʾyā*; Radtke, *Drei Schriften*, Index der Begriffe.

¹¹ Bernd Radtke, ‘Tirmid̄iana Minora’, *Oriens* xxxiv (1994) 248, 257, 258-60.

So wurde der mystiker zum gottesfreund, zum heiligen (*walī*, pl. *awliyāʾ*), zur ausnahmepersönlichkeit und für seine mitwelt zu einem mittel und vermittler zu Gott.¹²

Gesellschaftliche legitimation versuchte der mystiker durch den anspruch zu erhalten, über eine höhere art des wissens zu verfügen, das dem der gewöhnlichen *ʿulamāʾ* zwar nicht widersprach, aber in seinen augen eine notwendige ergänzung darstellte — und u.a. an diesem punkt, das sei angemerkt, setzten kritiker der alten sufik wie Ibn al-Jawzī¹³ und Ibn Taymiyya¹⁴ an.

Wir machen einen grossen sprung ins 18. und 19. jh. Es hat sich in der englischsprachigen literatur und in ihrem gefolge auch in deutschen veröffentlichungen eingebürgert, von massgeblichen persönlichkeiten der neueren, westlichen, arabisch-sprachigen sufik als von *Neo-Sufis* zu sprechen und mit dieser bezeichnung gewisse eigenheiten der lehre und praxis dieser persönlichkeiten zu verbinden, durch die sie sich von der älteren sufik unterschieden haben sollen. Wieweit bezeichnung und charakterisierung berechtigt sind, haben Seán O’Fahey und der verfasser in dem aufsatz *Neo-Sufism Reconsidered*¹⁵ einer ausführlichen kritik unterzogen, die hier nicht zu wiederholen ist.

Die wichtigsten persönlichkeiten des *Neo-Sufism* sind der algerier Aḥmad al-Tijānī (1737-1815),¹⁶ der gründer des ordens der tijāniyya, und der marokkaner Aḥmad b. Idrīs (1749/50-1837).¹⁷ Der wichtigste anhänger Aḥmad al-Tijānīs im 19. jh. war der gründer des tijāniyya-staates in Westafrika, al-Ḥājj ʿUmar (1793-1864).¹⁸ Als bedeutendste schüler des Aḥmad b. Idrīs sind zu nennen Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Sanūsī (1787-1859),¹⁹ gründer der sanūsiiyya und somit im

¹² EI, s.v. *Walī*.

¹³ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs Iblīs* (Kairo 1928) 166.

¹⁴ Meier, ‘Das sauberste’ 74-77/Bausteine ii, 696-9.

¹⁵ Rex Seán O’Fahey & Bernd Radtke, ‘Neo-Sufism Reconsiderd’, *Der Islam* lxx (1993) 52-87, u.a. 55-61.

¹⁶ Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya. A Sufi Order in the Modern World* (London 1965) 15 ff.

¹⁷ Grundlegend ist Rex Seán O’Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint* (London 1990); ALA = Rex Seán O’Fahey et alii, *Arabic Literature of Africa*, HdO 13 (Leiden 1994) i, 124-138.

¹⁸ Zu seiner biografie s. Bernd Radtke, ‘Von Iran nach Westafrika’, *Die Welt des Islams* xxxv (1995) 40-3; eine analyse der quellen seines hauptwerkes *Rimāḥ ḥizb al-raḥīm ʿalā nuḥūr ḥizb al-raḥīm* findet man bei Bernd Radtke, ‘Studies on the Sources of the *Kitāb Rimāḥ Ḥizb al-Raḥīm* of al-Ḥājj ʿUmar’, *Sudanica Africa* vi (1995) 73-113.

¹⁹ Grundlegend ist Knut S. Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar on the Desert Edge. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Sanūsī and his Brotherhood* (London 1995); ALA i, 166.

weiteren des staates Libyen; dann Muḥammad °Uthmān al-Mirghanī (1793-1852),²⁰ gründer der khatmiyya, die vor allem im Sudan wirkt; schliesslich Ibrāhīm al-Rašīd (1813-74), von dem die orden der rashīdiyya, ṣālihiyya and dandarāwiyya ausgingen.²¹

Alle diese persönlichkeiten und ihre anhänger haben ein reiches schrifttum hervorgebracht, das jedoch noch kaum erschlossen, geschweige denn erforscht ist.²²

Wie der artikel *Neo-Sufism Reconsidered* deutlich macht, darf angezweifelt werden, ob die bezeichnung der genannten persönlichkeiten als *Neo-Sufis* überhaupt sinnvoll ist. Eines fällt jedoch bei der lektüre ihrer schriften auf — und das gilt vor allem für Aḥmad al-Tijānī,²³ für Aḥmad b. Idrīs²⁴ und für al-Ḥājj °Umar²⁵: Vieles was sie lehren, geht auf den marokkaner (gest. 1132/1718-9)²⁶ zurück. Aḥmad b. Idrīs führt eine seiner affiliationen auf Dabbāgh zurück.²⁷ Über leben und lehre Dabbāghs wissen wir von seinem schüler Aḥmad b. al-Mubārak al-Lamaṭī²⁸ (gest. 1742), der seine

²⁰ ALA i, 187-198; Bernd Radtke, 'Lehrer - Schüler - Enkel. Aḥmad b. Idrīs, Muḥammad °Uthmān al-Mirghanī, Ismā'il al-Walī', *Oriens* xxxiii (1992) 98-103.

²¹ ALA i, 153-55.

²² In ALA i ist das material zum erstenmal gesichtet. Entsprechende arbeit zur tiḡāniyya in ALA ii = *Arabic Literature in Africa*. Volume ii: *The Writings of Central Sudanic Africa*, compiled by John Hunwick (Leiden 1995) u.a 256 ff, 550 ff.

²³ Al-Dabbāgh wird namentlich genannt *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī* i, 55, 174, 214; ii, 62; vgl. auch Bernd Radtke, 'Was steht in den Ḡawāhir al-ma'ānī? Versuch einer Ehrenrettung' (forthcoming). — Für die *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī* habe ich den druck Kairo 1380/1961 benutzt.

²⁴ Vgl. anm. 27.

²⁵ Ein verzeichnis der zitate aus dem *Ibrīz* in den *Rimāh* findet man bei Bernd Radtke, 'Studies' 85 f.; vgl. auch ibid. 111; ich zähle insgesamt 84 zitate; das ist rund ein achtel aller. — Für die *Rimāh* habe ich den druck, der sich am rande der *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī* befindet, benutzt. — Für bibliografische angaben zum *Ibrīz* vgl. anm. 29.

²⁶ Gest. 1132/1718-9; zu diesem todesdatum vgl. Fritz Meier, Fritz Meier, *Bahā'°i Walad. Grundzüge seines Lebens und seiner Mystik* (Leiden 1989) 207; GAL, G ii, 462 f.; S ii, 704.

Al-Dabbāgh und der *Ibrīz* werden in den folgenden arbeiten behandelt: Bernd Radtke, 'Sufism in the 18th Century. An Attempt at a Provisional Appraisal', *Die Welt des Islams* xxxvi (1996) 326-364. — id., 'Zwischen Traditionalismus und Intellektualismus. Geistesgeschichtliche und historiografische Bemerkungen zum *Ibrīz* des Aḥmad b. al-Mubārak al-Lamaṭī', in *Built on Solid Rock*, Festschrift für Ebbe Knudsen (Oslo 1997) 240-267. — id., '*Ibrīziana*', *Sudanic Africa* vii (1996) 113-158. — id., 'Der *Ibrīz* Lamaṭīs', in 26. Deutscher Orientalistentag 199' (forthcoming). — id., 'Wat betekent *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya* in de Islamitische mystiek van de 18e en 19e eeuw?', in MOI-publikaties (forthcoming).

²⁷ *The Letters of Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs*, ed. by Einar Thomassen and Bernd Radtke (London 1993) 64-5; Bernd Radtke, Seán R. O'Fahey & John O'Kane, 'Two Sufi Treatises of Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs', *Oriens* xxxv (1996) 151.

²⁸ Zur form der nisbe s. Meier, *Bahā* 208, anm. 25.

erinnerungen in dem buch *al-Ibrīz min kalām sayyidī al-ghawth* ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Dabbāgh²⁹ niederlegte. Dabbāgh selbst hat nichts schriftliches hinterlassen. Er wird von Lamaṭī wiederholt und nachdrücklich als analphabet (*ummī*)³⁰ bezeichnet. Ob zu recht, ist an anderen stellen von mir diskutiert worden.³¹

Der *Ibrīz* kann durchaus eine art bibel des sogenannten *Neo-Sufism* genannt werden. Das ist seit längerem bekannt,³² eine monografie fehlt jedoch bisher.³³ Sie hätte u.a. den einfluss der lehre Ibn al-‘Arabī zu untersuchen.³⁴

Was erinnert im werk al-Lamaṭīs an die lehren der alten sufik — auch und vor allem in den strittigen punkten, die die kritik der sufiegegner hervorrufen konnten? Betrachten wir die frage erkenntnis und erkenntnisgewissheit. Diese steht — sehr viel mehr, als es in der alten sufik der fall zu sein scheint — im zusammenhang mit einem ideenkomplex, der als *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya* bezeichnet werden kann.³⁵ Kannte die alte sufik den wahrtraum als möglichkeit der begegnung mit dem profeten Muḥammad, so die neuere die der leiblichen begegnung mit dem nachtodlichen Muḥammad, der also nicht als tot vorgestellt wurde, sondern in einer anderen daseinsform weiterwirkend. Die betonung der möglichkeit einer leiblichen begegnung “in fleisch und blut” ist, wie mir scheint, eines der charakteristika der modernen sufik.³⁶ Diese begegnung wird von al-Dabbāgh

²⁹ So der titel der zweibändigen damaszener ausgabe von 1984-6 von ‘Adnān al-Shammā‘.

³⁰ *Ibrīz* i, 33 f. und häufig.

³¹ U. a. ‘Zwischen Traditionalismus’ 241.

³² Michel Chodkiewicz, ‘The Diffusion of Ibn ‘Arabī’s Doctrine’, *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabī Society* ix (1991) 46.

³³ Ibid. 55, anm. 41. — Ich arbeite zusammen mit John O’Kane an einer kommentierten übersetzung ins englische.

³⁴ Ibid. 47; vgl. jedoch die bemerkungen Radtke, ‘Der Ibrīz Lamaṭīs’.

³⁵ Eine monografie fehlt; vgl. vorläufig Fritz Meier, ‘Eine auferstehung Mohammeds bei Suyūṭī’, *Der Islam* lxii (1985) 43/*Bausteine* ii, 820; O’Fahey & Radtke, ‘Neo-Sufism’ 64-71; Bernd Radtke, ‘Between Projection and Suppression. Some Considerations concerning the Study of Sufism’, in Frederick De Jong (ed.), *Shī‘a Islam, Sects and Sufism* (Utrecht 1992) 74; id. ‘Erleuchtung und Aufklärung: Islamische Mystik und europäischer Rationalismus’, *Die Welt des Islams* xxxiv (1994) 59; id. ‘Sufism in the 18th Century. An Attempt at a Provisional Appraisal’, *Die Welt des Islams* xxxvi (1996) 353 ff. und den artikel von van Ess, hier p. 43 f.

³⁶ Sie ist jedoch nicht ersatz für die *unio* mit Gott, sondern eine stufe des weges zu dieser; dazu Bernd Radtke, ‘Ismā‘īl al-Walī. Ein sudanesischer Theosoph des 19. Jahrhunderts’, *Der Islam* lxxii (1995) 153 f. und id., ‘Sufism in the 18th Century’ 360. — Ein beispiel aus dem 16. jh.: Der scheich Aḥmad al-Zawāwī (gest. 1517) vergleicht Gott mit einem weltlichen könig. Zu diesem direkten zugang zu verlangen, wäre unhöflich, ein vermittler ist

und anderen als ein überwältigendes erlebnis beschrieben, das einerseits für den mystiker kaum zu ertragen ist, ihm andererseits ein unsägliches glücksgefühl verschafft.³⁷ Es gibt ihm eine absolute erkenntnisgewissheit in allen fragen der rechtsfindung — sollten alle rechtsschulen verschwinden, wäre er durch seinen direkten kontakt mit dem profeten imstande, die gesamte sharia wiederherzustellen³⁸ — wohlgemerkt: Es handelt sich um eine *wiederherstellung*, nicht um eine neustiftung oder einen ersatz! Und die leibliche begegnung mit dem profeten führt den erleuchteten mystiker schliesslich zur *unio mystica* mit Gott.³⁹ Sein wissen ist dem eines gewöhnlichen theologen und juristen weit überlegen. Absurd muss ihm geradezu der fanatismus der einzelnen rechtsschulen (*taʿaṣṣub al-madhāhib*) vorkommen, der doch nur auf die tätigkeit des fehlbaren verstandes gegründet ist.⁴⁰

Neben der erkenntnisgewissheit in rechtsfragen besitzt der erleuchtete mystiker ein allumfassendes wissen, das er göttlicher inspiration verdankt. Al-Dabbāgh, angeblich ein ungebildeter analphabet, kennt den inhalt aller theologischen bücher und auch anderer literatur. Er weiss buchstäblich alles, kann “Gott und die welt erklären”. So darf al-Lamaʿī den inhalt seines buches als göttliche gabe bezeichnet. Auch die *Jawāhir al-maʿānī*, das von dem schüler Aḥmad al-Tijānīs, ʿAlī Ḥarāzīm Barrāda, zusammengestellte grundwerk der tijāniyya über leben und lehren des stifters des ordens entsprang dessen aussagen nach göttlicher inspiration.⁴¹ — Gegner der tijāniyya wollen es aber als plagiat einer älteren schrift nachweisen können. Dieser schwere vorwurf, der die glaubwürdigkeit des ordensstifters radikal in frage stellt, wurde meines wissens zuerst in den zwanziger jahren in Marokko aus salafitischen kreisen erhoben⁴² und wird bis heute

notwendig. Bei Gott ist das Muḥammad. So zu lesen bei ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī, *Lawāqih al-anwār al-quḍiyya fiʾl-ʿuhūd al-muḥammadiyya* (Kairo 1321) 116 f.; vgl. auch Muḥammad al-ʿArabī al-Sāʾih, *Bughyat al-mustafid li-sharḥ Munyat al-murid* (Kairo 1380/1959) 79 f. — Die darstellungen von Eric Geoffroy, *Le soufisme en Egypte et en Syrie* (Damas 1995) 101-3 und von Jonathan G. Katz, *Dreams, Sufism & Sainthood* (Leiden 1996), vor allem p. 227-9, sind wenig hilfreich. Bei Katz ist das problem überhaupt nicht erkannt.

³⁷ *Ibriz* i, 56-58, 400; ii, 56-8, 274-303.

³⁸ *Ibriz* ii, 97: *wa-law taʿaṭṭalat al-madhāhib bi-asrihā la-qadara ʿalā ihyāʾ al-shariʿa*; dazu auch Bernd Radtke, ‘Ijtihād and Neo-Sufism’, *Asiatische Studien* xlviii (1994) 920.

³⁹ *Ibriz* ii, 287 ff.; Radtke, ‘Ismāʿil’ 153; id. ‘Lehrer’ 102, 115.

⁴⁰ *Ibriz* ii, 97 f.

⁴¹ *Jawāhir al-maʿānī* i, 39; dazu Radtke, ‘Versuch einer Ehrenrettung’; Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya* 25.

⁴² Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya* 24 f.

aufrecht erhalten.⁴³ Nach ihnen seien teile der *Jawāhir al-maʿānī* aus der vita des Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh Maʿn al-Andalusī (gest. 1708), verfasst von ʿAbd al-Salām al-Qādirī (gest. 1698), mit dem titel *al-Maqṣad al-aḥmad fiʾl-taʿrīf bi-Sayyidinā Ibn ʿAbd Allāh Aḥmad*,⁴⁴ abgeschrieben worden.⁴⁵ Diese vorwürfe sind bisher nicht überprüft werden.⁴⁶ Ein erster, oberflächlicher vergleich von *Jawāhir al-maʿānī* und *Maqṣad* zeigt, dass sie nicht ganz unberechtigt zu sein scheinen.

Hinter der behauptung, die *dhikr*-formeln und die litaneien des ordens persönlich vom profeten oder dem schutzpatron der mystiker, Khāḍir, erhalten zu haben, steht der anspruch, mit göttlichem wissen begnadet zu sein. Das sagen al-Dabbāgh,⁴⁷ Aḥmad al-Tijānī⁴⁸ und Aḥmad b. Idrīs.⁴⁹ Dass diese formeln und litaneien teile aus älterer literatur enthalten konnten,⁵⁰ wurde nicht als widerspruch angesehen.

Selbstverständlich ist der allwissenheitsanspruch etwa eines al-Dabbāgh für den normalen theologen nicht akzeptabel. Und zumindest für gewisse theologen — ich denke hier vor allem an die waghābiyya — auch nicht die behauptung, den profeten in “fleisch und blut” begegnen zu können. Für die waghābiyya ist nicht nur der direkte zugang zu Gott seit dem tode des profeten Muḥammad verschlossen, auch der profet selbst ist wirklich tot, nicht mehr kommunizierbar.⁵¹

Betrachten wir die lehren des enkelschülers von al-Dabbāgh, Aḥmad b. Idrīs. Obwohl gerade im vergangenen jahrzehnt grosse fortschritte in der erforschung seiner persönlichkeits gemacht worden sind, stehen wir, was seine lehren betrifft, noch am anfang.⁵² Wir besitzen eigene schriften Aḥmads, daneben aufzeichnungen seiner schüler und berichte über ihn.⁵³ Unter seinen eigenen schriften wiederum kann man, wie es scheint, solche unterscheiden, die für ein grösseres publikum bestimmt, und solche, die an den kreis seiner in-

⁴³ Vgl. u.a. den beitrag von Muḥammad S. Umar, p. 364.

⁴⁴ Zu buch und verfasser vgl. E. Lévi-Provençal, *Les historiens des chorfas* (repr. Casablanca 1991) 277 f.

⁴⁵ Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya* 24 f.

⁴⁶ Radtke, ‘Versuch einer Ehrenrettung’.

⁴⁷ *Ibrīz* i, 51 f.

⁴⁸ *Jawāhir al-maʿānī* i, 37 f.; 91.

⁴⁹ Radtke usw., ‘Two Sufi Treatises’ 161-4.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 162; *Jawāhir al-maʿānī* i, 103-6; dazu Radtke, ‘Versuch einer Ehrenrettung’.

⁵¹ Meier, ‘Eine Auferstehung’ 24 f.

⁵² Vgl. dazu auch den literaturbericht bei Radtke, ‘Sufism in the 18th Century’ 327-30.

⁵³ Im einzelnen ALA i, 124-138.

timen schüler gerichtet waren. Als letztere sind vor allem sein briefe aufzufassen.⁵⁴ In ihnen erscheint Aḥmad als im ständigen kontakt mit dem profeten stehend. Er empfängt von diesem heilsbotschaften für sich und seine anhänger und fragt ihn um rat in rechtsfragen.⁵⁵

Eine streitschrift ist die *Risālat al-Radd ʿalā ahl al-raʿy*.⁵⁶ Die *ahl al-raʿy* sind die vertreter der traditionellen rechtsschulen, deren autoritätsanspruch, der sich allein auf den fehlbaren verstand gründet,⁵⁷ von Aḥmad verworfen wird.⁵⁸ Der normale muslim kann auf alle rechtsfragen antworten aus dem text von koran und sunna erhalten, wenn er nur die rechte gottesfurcht (*taqwā*) besitzt. Ist das der fall, so erhält er aufklärung durch göttliche eingebung (*furqān*).⁵⁹ Hier handelt es sich also um eine stufe vor den erfahrungen der *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya*, die in dieser schrift nicht erwähnt werden. Aber schon diese ansichten mussten den protest der "theologenzunft" hervorrufen, denn auch sie stellten den autoritätsanspruch der rechtsschulen (*madhāhib*) radikal in frage. Aḥmad b. Idrīs spricht, allerdings nur andeutungsweise, von schwierigkeiten mit den *ʿulamāʾ* in seiner heimat Marokko, die seiner endgültigen abreise vorangingen.⁶⁰ Auch in Mekka, wohin er wahrscheinlich 1799-1800 über Ägypten gelangte, scheint er sich mit dem establishment der rechtsschulen angelegt zu haben — auch in diesem falle sind die quellen, überwiegend hagiografischer natur, leider alles andere als deutlich.⁶¹ Interessanterweise überstand er jedoch die wāḥḥābitische besetzung (1803-13) unbeschadet. Anscheinend erst auf druck der ägyptischen besatzer ist er 1828 zum verlassen Mekkas gezwungen worden.⁶² Er wandte sich dem Jemen zu und liess sich schliesslich in Ṣabyā in ʿAsīr nieder, das damals unter der herrschaft des wāḥḥābitischen

⁵⁴ *The Letters of Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs, General Introduction.*

⁵⁵ Vgl. z. b. *ibid.* 90 f. (Letter xiii) und *General Introduction.*

⁵⁶ ALA i, 133, nr. 33. — Die schrift wird zusammen mit der *Munāẓara* (hier anm. 60) und zwei briefen mit edition und englischer übersetzung in Bernd Radtke, John O'Kane, Knut S. Vikør & Seán O'Fahey, *The Exoteric Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs. A Sufi's Critique on the Madhāhib and the Wāḥḥābīs* erscheinen. Die angegebenen paragraphen (§) beziehen sich auf diese edition.

⁵⁷ *Risālat al-Radd* § 14.

⁵⁸ Er verwirft also durchaus nicht die sharia! Dazu Radtke, 'Erleuchtung' 48, anm. 4; 64.

⁵⁹ *Risālat al-Radd* § 14; Radtke, 'Erleuchtung' 58.

⁶⁰ *Munāẓara* § 42 (vgl. anm. 56). — Zu früheren editionen vgl. *A Sufi's Critique, Introduction*; hier nenne ich: Ḥasan ʿĀkīsh, *Munāẓarat Aḥmad ibn Idrīs maʿa fuqahāʾ ʿAsīr*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh Abū Dāhish, *Al-ʿArab* v und vi (1406/1986).

⁶¹ *A Sufi's Critique, Introduction*; O'Fahey, *Enigmatic Saint* 64.

⁶² *Ibid.* 68.

emirs °Alī b. Mujaththal stand.⁶³

Aber auch jetzt war ihm kein ruhiges verweilen beschieden. Er sah sich am ende seines lebens⁶⁴ zu einem streitgespräch mit wāḥḥābītischen °ulamā° gezwungen — veranlasst durch das verhalten seiner zahlreichen schüler,⁶⁵ die ihm hierhin gefolgt waren, über das wir den bericht seines schülers °Ākiš besitzen.⁶⁶

Was wird Aḥmad von seinen gegnern vorgeworfen? Neben der von der ihrigen abweichenden ausführung des ritualgebets vor allem zwei dinge: Er sei anhänger der lehren Ibn al-°Arabīs⁶⁷ — für die wāḥḥābīten selbstverständlich das rote tuch — und er pflege eine *interpretatio ab intra* des korans, die dem äusserem wortlaut widerspreche.⁶⁸ Ich will nicht im einzelnen schildern, mit welchen argumenten Aḥmad seine gegner widerlegt.⁶⁹ Ihre vorwürfe sind alles andere als originell. Man kann sie sogar als klischeeartig bezeichnen.⁷⁰ Selbstverständlich geht er als überlegener sieger aus dem streitgespräch hervor — und da der bericht von seinem schüler stammt, kann das wohl auch nicht anders sein.

Bemerkenswert ist, dass kein wort über den komplex *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya* gesagt wird, während Aḥmads verwerfung der kodifizierten tradition, also der autorität der rechtsschulen, sehr deutlich zur sprache kommt.⁷¹

Zum schluss: Bereits al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidī im 3./9. jh. hatte in träumen die heilsbotschaft erhalten, er sei das siegel der gottesfreundschaft (*khatm al-walāya*) und nehme nach dem profeten den zweiten rang in der geistigen hierarchie der welt ein.⁷² Bei unseren “Neo-Sufis” kann man eine steigerung dieser heilsgewissheit feststellen. Nicht nur, dass ihnen der profet selbst ihren hohen rang mitteilt:⁷³ sowohl Aḥmad al-Tijānī als auch Muḥammad °Uthmān al-

⁶³ *A Sufi's Critique*, Introduction.

⁶⁴ Das streitgespräch fand fünf jahre vor seinem tod 1837 ende 1832 statt.

⁶⁵ Für einzelheiten vgl. Seán R. O'Fahey, “Games, Dancing and Handclapping”. A Sufi Controversy in South Arabia”, in Heikki Palva and Knut S. Vikør (eds.), *The Middle East — Unity and Diversity*. Papers from the Second Nordic Conference on Middle Eastern Studies (Copenhagen 1993) 123-132; *A Sufi's Critique*, Introduction.

⁶⁶ Hier anm. 60.

⁶⁷ *Munāẓara* § 8-9.

⁶⁸ *Munāẓara* § 9.

⁶⁹ *Munāẓara* §§ 21 ff.

⁷⁰ Dazu der beitrage von M. Chodkiewicz, hier p. 93 ff..

⁷¹ U.a. *Munāẓara* § 28.

⁷² Radtke, ‘Tirmidiana Minora’ 260-63.

⁷³ Für Aḥmad al-Tijānī *Jawāhir al-ma°ānī* i, 97; Bernd Radtke, ‘Gesetz und Pfad in der

Mirghani erhalten von ihm die mitteilung, das siegel der gottesfreundschaft zu sein. Auch ihren anhängern wird paradisesgewissheit versprochen.⁷⁴ Aber alles das, über das wohl nur im engeren kreis der ordensmitglieder besprochen wurde, drang doch an die öffentlichkeit und rief die gegner auf den plan. Die deutlichsten formulierungen dieser gegnerschaft aus den kreisen der etablierten theologenschaft sind in dem fatwa des Azhar-gelehrten Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār zu finden.⁷⁵

Kommen wir zu einem resumé! Lassen wir den vorwurf des antinomismus beiseite, so zeigt sich, dass die grösste gegnerschaft der anspruch der mystiker hervorrufen musste, über eine höhere, "sicherere" form der erkenntnis zu verfügen, die sie zur eigentlichen rechtsautorität machte. Das war für den normalen theologen und juristen schlechthin nicht zu akzeptieren. Mit aller vorsicht kann auch gesagt werden, dass in der neueren sufik eine steigerung dieses autoritätsanspruches platz gefunden zu haben scheint.⁷⁶ Unannehmbar ist ferner der anspruch auf heilsgewissheit, den man mit dem gebrauch der ordenslitaneien verband, denen profetische und göttliche herkunft zugeschrieben wurde. Sie wurden dadurch in ein unerlaubtes, ja unmögliches konkurrenzverhältnis zum text des korans gesetzt.

Die waghābiyya andererseits, die selbst erbitterter gegner der *madhāhib*, zumindest in ihrer frühfase, war und in dieser hinsicht der Neo-Sufik nahestand, konnte deren mystische, sufische seiten unmöglich akzeptieren: *interpretatio ab intra* der heiligen überlieferung und *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya* etwa. Insbesondere der lebenslauf Aḥmad b. Idrīs' zeigt mit aller deutlichkeit das

frühen islamischen Mystik. Einige Bemerkungen', in U. Bianchi (ed.), *The Notion of «Religion» in Comparative Research*. Selected Proceedings of the xvi IAHR Congress (Rom 1993) 519; für Aḥmad b. Idrīs vgl. Radtke et alii, 'Two Sufi Treatises' 163; für al-Mirghani vgl. Radtke, 'Lehrer' 104.

⁷⁴ Radtke, 'Gesetz' a.a.o.

⁷⁵ Vgl. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār, *Risāla fī'l-ijtihād* 103-4, ed. Knut S. Vikør, in *Sources for Sānūsī Studies* (Bergen 1996). Er wirft Aḥmad b. Idrīs vor, zu behaupten, im direkten mündlichen kontakt mit dem profeten zu stehen. Bereits der osmanische theologe Birgili äussert sich im 16. jh. [*al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya wa'l-sīra al-aḥmadiyya* (Cairo 1379/1960) 13] über den anspruch gewisser sufis seiner zeit, einen direkten zugang zum profeten und zu Gott zu besitzen, sehr negativ. Die frage ist, ob er die meinung der sufis korrekt wiedergibt oder böswillig verdreht. — Zum ganzen auch *A Sufi's Critique*, Introduction.

⁷⁶ Das stellt auch Reinhard Schulze fest: *Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert* (Leiden 1990) 19; zur kritik an seiner darstellung vgl. Radtke, 'Erleuchtung' 61 f.; weiteres *A Sufi's Critique*, Introduction.

konfrontiertsein mit der gegnerschaft des etablierten islams — des establishments der rechtsschulen — einerseits und des sogenannten fundamentalismus — der wāḥḥābiyya — andererseits.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Seit der erstfassung dieser arbeit sind über drei jahre vergangen, in denen ich mehrere artikel zu einzelnen der hier angesprochenen themen veröffentlicht habe. Ihre bibliografie findet man in den fussnoten.

II

AL-ANDALUS, NORTH AFRICA, AND THE MIDDLE EAST

OPPOSITION TO SUFISM IN AL-ANDALUS

MARIBEL FIERRO

The history of Islamic mysticism in al-Andalus still remains to be written, notwithstanding the availability of a growing number of formerly unknown sources, and the equally growing number of studies focusing on personalities, trends, or particular issues. This lack of a comprehensive survey of the history of Andalusian Sufism makes it difficult to deal meaningfully with its detractors. Yet, we feel it is possible to sketch some of the general trends by analyzing a number of specific cases of opposition in three different periods, viz. opposition to Muḥammad b. Masarra and his followers in the Umayyad and Taifa periods; to Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, Abū'l-Ḥakam Ibn Barrajān, Abū'l-ʿAbbās Ibn al-ʿArīf and Abū'l-Qāsim Ibn Qasī in the Almoravid period; and to certain groups of Sufis in the Naṣrid period.¹ At the same time we will attempt to establish who the opponents of Sufism were: *fuqahāʾ*, rulers, or common people, why they opposed Sufism or certain Sufis (for doctrinal, political or socio-economic reasons), and in what way their opposition was expressed (by literary, political and/or legal action).

¹ To attain a more comprehensive picture of Sufism in al-Andalus, Sufi opposition to non-Sufi groups and doctrines should also be studied. Appropriate texts for such a study are not lacking, for example, the writings of Ibn ʿAbbād (see P. Nwyia, *Un mystique prédicateur à la Qarawīyīn de Fès: Ibn ʿAbbād de Ronda* (1332-1390) (Beirut 1961) 185; and some works of Muḥyi'l-Dīn Ibn ʿArabī, *Risālat al-quḍs*, Spanish transl. M. Asín Palacios, *Vidas de santones andaluces la 'Epístola de la santidad' de Ibn ʿArabī de Murcia* (Madrid 1939; 2nd ed. Madrid 1981); English transl. R.W.J. Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia. The Rūḥ al-quḍs and al-Durrat al-fākhiraḥ of Ibn ʿArabī* (London 1971) 104-6.

The Arab and Berber warriors who had conquered the Iberian Peninsula at the end of the first/beginning of the eighth century, were neither ascetics nor propagators of values associated with asceticism. One of the first ascetic values to appear among the emerging group of the *‘ulamā’*² was the avoidance of whatever is illicit, in conjunction with the related ideal of restricting or avoiding contact with rulers (*inqibād ‘an al-sultān*).³ By the middle of the third/ninth century some Muslims were seeking more than a style of behaviour and general ethics. This is evident from what is known about the spread of certain new forms of religious practice and belief. As regards practice, some pious Muslims devoted themselves to the constant recitation of the Koran, to prayer and fasting in excess of what was prescribed, and to alms-giving. The combination of asceticism with an interest in theology, specifically Mu‘tazilī theology, as was characteristic of certain *‘ulamā’* of the period, points to developments relative to religious belief.⁴

A pivotal religious scholar in the Umayyad period in al-Andalus is Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ (d. 287/900), who was responsible for the first stage of integration of *‘ilm al-ḥadīth* into Mālikism. He travelled in the East in order to collect material on ascetics and asceticism, and he himself is described in the sources as leading an ascetic life and attracting a group of ascetics around him. His role should be assessed as one of ‘Islamicizing’ the ascetic tendencies of his contemporaries, who were Muslims of different ethnic origins. This process of ‘Islamization’ is of special interest in the case of a pupil of Ibn Waḍḍāḥ, Aṣḥagh b. Mālik (d. 299/911 or 304/916), a non-Arab

² ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb al-Sulamī (d. 238/852) wrote a *Kitāb al-wara’*: see J. Aguadé, ‘El libro del escrúpulo religioso (*Kitāb al-wara’*) de ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb’, in *Actas del XII Congreso de la U.E.A.I. (Málaga 1984)* (Madrid 1986) 17-34. By contrast, Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Laythī (d. 234/838), Ibn Ḥabīb’s contemporary and the transmitter of Mālik’s *Muwatta’*, declared himself against chastity, extreme *tawakkul* and poverty; see al-Qāḍi ‘Iyāḍ, *Tartīb al-madārik* (Rabat 1983), iii, 379. He was mildly criticized by his disciple Sa‘īd b. Ḥassān al-Ṣā‘igh, who seems to have taken ascetic values more seriously. This difference between teacher and student may reflect their different social background, involving on the one hand the *sūq* (Sa‘īd b. Ḥassān) and on the other the *khidma* (Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā).

³ See M. Marín, ‘*Inqibād ‘an al-sultān*: *‘ulamā’* and political power in al-Andalus’, in *Saber religioso y poder político en el Islam* (Madrid 1994) 127-140.

⁴ See M. Fierro, *La heterodoxia en al-Andalus durante el periodo omeya* (Madrid 1987) 49-53; idem, ‘Religious beliefs and practices in al-Andalus in the third/ninth century’, *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* lxvi (1992) 18. On the combination of asceticism and Mu‘tazilism, see S. Stroumsa, ‘The beginnings of the Mu‘tazila reconsidered’, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* xiii (1990) 265-293.

of very recent conversion who never left al-Andalus. Aṣḡagh also seems to have been known for his asceticism outside his home town of Cabra. The fact that he is mentioned as having ‘companions like monks’ (*kāna lahu aṣḡāb ka’l-ruhbān*) suggests the possibility that his asceticism was influenced by practices he observed among Christians.⁵ Ibn Waḍḍāḥ, who lived in Córdoba, was attracted by Aṣḡagh’s asceticism, and used to visit him in Cabra. Later, when Ibn Waḍḍāḥ returned from the East bringing with him *akḡbār* about Muslim ascetics, it was Aṣḡagh who joined him in Córdoba in what seems to have been an attempt to ‘Islamicize’ his own ascetic practices.⁶

Although Aṣḡagh himself was an ascetic and not a mystic, we have information about several mystics who were his contemporaries.⁷ Most notable among them were Abū Wahb °Abd al-Raḡmān al-°Abbāsī al-Zāhid (d. 344/955),⁸ a non-Andalusī who settled in Córdoba, Abū Bakr Yumn b. Rizq al-Zāhid (d. before 322/933) who lived in Tudela in the Northern frontier region, and Maslama b. Qāsim al-Zayyāt al-Qurtubī (293-353/906-64). Yumn b. Rizq was suspect for his beliefs (he was called *ṣāḡīb wasāwis*), which he expounded in his *Kitāb al-zuḡd*.⁹ This book, which has not come down to us, was censored by the Cordovan Aḡmad b. Khālīd Ibn al-Jabbāb

⁵ On the ‘Christian’ origins of Islamic mysticism, see J. Baldick, *Mystical Islam. An introduction to Sufism* (London 1989). Baldick does not mention M. Asín Palacios, who put forward the same view in his *El Islam cristianizado. Estudio del Sufismo a través de las obras de Abenarabi de Murcia* (Madrid 1931); French transl. by B. Dubant (Paris 1982). For developments in Iraq similar to those of al-Andalus, see M.G. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquest* (Princeton 1984) 448-453.

⁶ See Fierro, ‘Religious beliefs and practices’ 30.

⁷ The first Andalusī to be called *ṣūfī* in a biographical dictionary was °Abd Allāh b. Naṣr (d. 315/927); see M. Marín, ‘The early development of *zuḡd* in al-Andalus’, in Frederick De Jong (ed.), *Shī‘a Islam, Sects and Sufism. Historical dimensions, religious practice and methodological considerations* (Utrecht 1992) 85.

⁸ See M. Marín, ‘Un nuevo texto de Ibn Baṣḡuwāl: *Ajbār Abī Wahb*’, *Al-Qanṡara* x (1989) 385-403.

⁹ On Yumn b. Rizq, see M. °A. Makki, *Ensayo sobre las aportaciones orientales en la España musulmana y su influencia en la formación de la cultura hispano-árabe* (Madrid 1968) 157; Fierro, *Heterodoxia*, index; M. Marín, ‘*Zuḡhād* de al-Andalus (300-420/912-1029)’, *Al-Qanṡara* xii (1991) 454. We do not know whether Yumn b. Rizq represented a ‘local’ Sufi tradition (the sources do not mention that he travelled to the East), whereas Abū Wahb seems to represent the introduction of Eastern (mainly Iraqi) Sufi tendencies. For a similar pattern, see J. Chabbi, ‘*Zuḡd* et soufisme au Khurassan (IVe/Xe siècle)’, in *La signification du Bas Moyen Age dans l’histoire et la culture du monde musulman. Actes du 8me Congrès de l’Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants. Aix-en-Provence — Septembre 1976* (Aix-en-Provence 1978) 53-62.

(d. 322/934), the author of a refutation of Ibn Masarra (see below). Maslama b. Qāsim al-Zayyāt al-Qurṭubī was a pupil of the eastern mystic Abū Saʿīd b. al-Aʿrābī (d. 341/952). This master had other pupils who, like Maslama, are described as being preoccupied with inner knowledge (*ʿilm al-bāṭin*).¹⁰ Maslama transmitted a work of the Egyptian mystic Dhūʿl-Nūn al-Miṣrī and was considered suspect in his doctrines (he is called *ṣāhib ruqan wa-nīranjāt*).¹¹ He seems to have been grappling with the difficulties of what Friedmann calls ‘substitutes for prophecy’. This problem arose from the need to keep open the channel linking the believers with God, and to give the assurance that ‘the cessation of prophecy does not imply the disappearance of divine guidance for the Muslim community’, since ‘divine inspiration would find alternative ways to reach the community’.¹² In the second half of the third/ninth century, Abū ʿAlī al-Sarrāj, who seems to have been an Ismāʿīlī (perhaps Fāṭimid) propagandist, presented himself as an ascetic. He dressed in wool (*ṣūf*), wore sandals, rode a donkey, and preached *jihād* against the Christians. According to the sources, however, his real aim was to promote civil strife (*fitna*). He persuaded an Umayyad pretender, Ibn al-Qiṭṭ, to lead what turned out to be an unsuccessful rebellion in 288/900. Ibn al-Qiṭṭ’s followers were Berbers living in the Middle Frontier, who were attracted to him because of his predictions. Ibn al-Qiṭṭ presented himself as the Mahdī and claimed that God had granted him the power to perform miracles. His followers came to consider him a prophet.¹³ The sources describe him as a *shaʿbadh* (magician) and *kāhin* (soothsayer). Before and after Ibn al-Qiṭṭ’s lifetime some Andalus Muslims are mentioned as being *mujāb al-daʿwa*, people whose prayers are answered by God and therefore have the ability to perform miracles.¹⁴ Thus, at the beginning of the Islamization of al-Andalus, the repositories of religious authority for Muslim converts

¹⁰ Fierro, *Heterodoxia* 130; M. Marín, ‘Abū Saʿīd Ibn al-Aʿrābī et le développement du ṣūfisme dans al-Andalus’, *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* lxxiii-iv (1992) 28-38.

¹¹ Fierro, *Heterodoxia* 129-130.

¹² See M. Fierro, ‘The polemic about the *karāmāt al-awliyāʾ* and the development of Ṣūfism in al-Andalus (4th-10th/5th-11th centuries)’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* lv (1992) 246. The quotations are from Y. Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous: Aspects of Aḥmadī Religious Thought and its Medieval Background* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1989).

¹³ Fierro, *Heterodoxia* 106-111.

¹⁴ See M. Marín’s introduction to Ibn Bashkuwāl, *Kitāb al-mustaghthīn bi’llāh* (Madrid 1991) 59-65.

appear to have been local pious men, still rooted in the former religion (as in the case of Aṣḥabagh b. Mālik). In the towns, however, other figures of authority were emerging: the *fiqh*-oriented scholar, and the *ḥadīth*-oriented scholar. Ibn Waddāḥ represented an attempt to combine both tendencies and to cultivate asceticism (*zuhd*) within the bounds of Islamic models. Abū Wahb, Yumn b. Rizq and Maslama b. Qāsim would seem to represent different (urban) Sufi trends, whereas Abū ʿAlī al-Sarrāj embodies the possibilities of political action associated with belief in the *mahdī* or in saints.

The first Andalusī Sufi thinker whose system of thought and doctrine we know in some detail is Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Masarra (d. 319/931).¹⁵ Ibn Masarra, who was a non-Arab, performed a *riḥla* to the East where he came into contact with Sufi doctrines. After his return to al-Andalus, he settled in his village near Córdoba where his pupils used to visit him.¹⁶ According to one source, the real purpose of Ibn Masarra's *riḥla* to the East was to escape from an accusation of heresy (*zandaqa*). Since he does not seem to have held any Sufi belief before his journey to the East, such an accusation, if true, may have been related to his penchant for *kalām* and his Muʿtazilī ideas. These ideas were probably passed on to him by his father who is known to have had an interest in Muʿtazilism. In the East he became familiar with the works and Sufi doctrines of Dhū'l-Nūn and Abū Yaʿqūb al-Nahrajūrī. Although the sources do not mention the influence of Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896),¹⁷ the latter's influence is clear in Ibn Masarra's preserved works. Addas, in her analysis of these works, concurs with Muḥyī'l-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī's view of Ibn Masarra as a Sufi.¹⁸ Tornero, however, finds that Ibn Masarra is primarily a philosopher who is very much influenced by Neo-Platonic doctrines, and whose principal aim is to show the concordance between the Koran and philosophy.

¹⁵ Two of his books were published by the Egyptian scholar Muḥammad Kamāl Ibrāhīm Jaʿfar: 'Min muʿallafāt Ibn Masarra al-mafqūda', *Majallat Kulliyyat al-tarbiya* (Tripoli), iii-iv (1972-4) 27-63; and *Min al-turāth al-falsafī li-Ibn Masarra* (Cairo 1402/1982).

¹⁶ For further information relevant to an assessment of Ibn Masarra's contribution to the development of Sufism in al-Andalus, see the studies by Marín, 'The early development of *zuhd*' and 'Zuhūd de al-Andalus'; and Fierro, 'Religious beliefs and practices' and 'The polemic about the *karāmāt al-awliyā*'.

¹⁷ On this Sufi from Basra, see G. Böwering, *The Mystical Vision of Existence in Classical Islam. The Qurʾānic Hermeneutics of the Ṣūfī Sahl at-Tustarī* (d. 283/896) (Berlin/New York 1980).

¹⁸ C. Addas, 'Andalusī mysticism and the rise of Ibn ʿArabī', in S.Kh. Jayyusi (ed.), *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* (Leiden 1992) 917-8.

Thus, his *Risālat al-iʿtibār* deals with the way in which man can know God through the signs inherent in created things. Ibn Masarra's *Kitāb al-ḥurūf*, in which he deals with the letters found at the beginning of some Koranic verses, does not aim at magical interpretation or predicting the future, but intends to show that the Koran is nothing less than an explanation of creation. Thus, man can achieve prophecy, not so much through spiritual purification, but through the speculative process.¹⁹

Opposition to Ibn Masarra took the form of scholarly refutations both by eastern and Andalusī authors.²⁰ One of the latter was Aḥmad b. Khālīd Ibn al-Jabbāb al-Qurṭubī (d. 322/934), who has already been mentioned as the censor of Yumn b. Rizq's *Kitāb al-zuhd*. He was a *muḥaddith* who also wrote *al-Radd ʿalā Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Masarra*. Neither of these texts has come down to us. Since Ibn Masarra does not quote *ḥadīth* in his extant works, Ibn al-Jabbāb's tract may have focused on this, and thus represent the mistrust some traditionists felt towards mystical experiences which side-stepped the narrative framework imposed by the *ḥadīth* material. The eastern authors Abū Saʿīd Ibn al-Aʿrābī (d. 341/952), and Aḥmad b. Sālīm (d. 356/967)²¹ also rejected Ibn Masarra's doctrine, which they must have known through their Andalusī pupils. These three authors probably refuted Ibn Masarra while he was still alive. Refutations such as *Kitāb fī'l-radd ʿalā Ibn Masarra* by the Cordovan Ibn Yabqā (d. 381/991) and a tract by the Cordovan grammarian al-Zubaydī point to the survival of Ibn Masarra's teachings after his death. None of these works have come down to us, but we do possess a fragment of the refutation written by Abū ʿUmar al-Ṭalamankī (d. 429/1037), himself inclined towards Sufism. In his refutation, also known as *al-Radd ʿalā'l-bāṭiniyya*, al-Ṭalamankī says that Ibn Masarra claimed to be a prophet (*Ibn Masarra iddaʿā 'l-nubuwwa wa-zaʿama annahu samiʿa l-kalām fa-thabata fī nafsīhi annahu min*

¹⁹ See E. Tornero, 'Noticia sobre la publicación de obras inéditas de Ibn Masarra', *Al-Qanṭara* xiv (1993) 61. Concerning Neo-Platonic influence on Sufism, see Baldick, op. cit. 21. Cf. V.J. Cornell, 'Mirrors of Prophethood: the Evolving Image of the Spiritual Master in the Western Maghrib from the Origins of Šūfism to the End' (Ph.D. Diss. Univ. of California, Los Angeles 1989) 173, who maintains that Neo-Platonic philosophy had no influence in the development of Sufism in al-Andalus.

²⁰ See Fierro, *Heterodoxia* 139, note 52 (those refutations are mentioned in Ibn al-Faraḍī's *Taʾriḫ ʿulamāʾ al-Andalus* in the biography devoted to Ibn Masarra).

²¹ On Ibn Sālīm al-Tustarī, see Böwering, op. cit. 21-2, 92-9. He was a follower of Sahl al-Tustarī like Ibn Masarra and leader of the Sufi group called *al-Sālimiyya*; see EI, s.v. *Sālimiyya*.

‘ind Allāh).²² Finally, there is evidence that a specific practice of Ibn Masarra (related to *ittibā‘ āthār al-nabī*) was refuted by his teacher Ibn Waddāh.²³

The criticism of Ibn Masarra’s doctrines and practice that we have so far reviewed seems to have been a scholarly activity, undertaken without any prompting by the ruler and his delegates. I mentioned above that Ibn Masarra is described as having left the capital and retired to his village near Córdoba, where he was visited by his propagandists and students (*du‘ātuhu wa-aṣḥābuhu*) and where he gave them instruction,²⁴ thus implying that in his seclusion he could propagate his doctrine in a way that would have been impossible in Córdoba. It is also said that Ibn Masarra obliged his followers to keep his teachings secret.²⁵ These precautions would explain the fact that he was neither persecuted nor prevented from proselytizing. Yet, it should be pointed out that the source which provides this information does so in the context of describing the persecution of Ibn Masarra’s followers after his death. Thus, it may be an interpretation of Ibn Masarra’s behaviour based on unjustified inference from later circumstances: his relative seclusion may have been due not to any fear of persecution but rather in conformity with his doctrinal views. On the other hand, Ibn Masarra was active during a period of intellectual ferment, when the *‘ulamā’* were competing with one another in order to impose their preferred doctrines and to win the ruler’s support. The major competition was that between the *ahl al-ra’y* and the *ahl al-ḥadīth*, which led to the imprisonment and trial of a member of the *ahl al-ḥadīth*, Baqī b. Makhlad, at the instigation of members of the other group. Ibn Masarra may well have chosen to withdraw from the arena where such contests were taking place, i.e. the political capital of al-Andalus, not so much out of fear for the emir’s reaction, but rather to avoid clashes with his colleagues. It should be borne in mind that the second half of the third/ninth century was a period of political weakness on the part of the Umayyad emir.

After Ibn Masarra’s death, his followers continued to propagate his teachings in secret among different social groups (*khāṣṣa wa-‘amma*) both inside Córdoba and beyond. Towards the end of his

²² Fierro, ‘The polemic about *karāmāt al-awliyā’*’ 247, note 103.

²³ See M. Fierro, ‘Una refutación contra Ibn Masarra’, *Al-Qanṭara* x (1989) 273-5.

²⁴ Ibn Ḥayyān, *Muqtabas*, ed. P. Chalmeta, F. Corriente and M. Sobh (Madrid 1979); transl. M.J. Viguera and F. Corriente (Saragossa 1981) v, f. 11 (text 20/transl. 26).

²⁵ The same is said of the Sālimiyya; see note 21.

reign, the Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Rahmān III (300-50/912-61) ordered their persecution as heretics, apparently under pressure from those who represented ‘orthodoxy’ (*ahl al-sunna*). Decrees of the caliph condemning Ibn Masarra’s followers and demanding their repentance were read in the central mosque of Córdoba in 340/952, 345/956, and 346/957. These decrees were also dispatched to the provinces to be read in every town. At the same time, the caliph ordered his governors and military commanders to investigate the secrets of the Masarrīs and to draw up a list of the names of suspects to be transported to Córdoba, where those found guilty would be punished.

In these caliphal decrees the Masarrīs are depicted as ascetic in external appearance, thus rendering them attractive to the populace, but as being able to hide their innovations because they lived in remote or secluded places. The impression one gets is that Masarrīs were both an urban phenomenon consisting of literate men who read books from which they derived their doctrines and who even produced their own books,²⁶ as well as a rural phenomenon consisting of men who lived in remote places. The connection between the urban and the secluded Masarrīs escapes us; they may or may not have been the same persons. Accounts of their doctrines mention that they believed the Koran to be created, and denied repentance (*akdhabū al-tawba*) and intercession (*abṭalū al-shafāʿa*). Moreover, they engaged in polemics about the signs of God (*aktharū al-jidāl fī āyāt Allāh*) and undertook a false interpretation of the Traditions from the Prophet (*harrafū al-taʾawwul fī ḥadīth rasūl Allāh*).²⁷ Other accusations leveled against them included insulting the *salaf* and not recognizing the legitimacy of the first three caliphs (this explains the insistence on the legitimacy of the Umayyads and the attack against the ʿAbbāsids in the caliphal writings); refusing to return the salutation (*salām*) of the Muslims (which means that they considered those who did not share their beliefs to be infidels), practicing seclusion, and declaring that it was licit to shed the blood of the Muslims (which again means that they considered the ‘others’ to be infidels).²⁸ The stress on the figure of the Prophet in the caliphal decrees

²⁶ For the ‘urban’ Masarrīs, see Fierro, *Heterodoxia* 137-140, 155-6, 166-8.

²⁷ See Fierro, *Heterodoxia* 132-40. All this is not specifically Sufi. Different doctrines, including Muʿtazilism, may have been lumped together under the label ‘Masarrī’ or ‘follower of Ibn Masarra’. On the other hand, Muʿtazilis were not necessarily Masarrīs and, in fact, Muʿtazilis (all of them belonging to the urban elites) were not persecuted.

²⁸ This attitude is related to their *iʿtizāl*. They are never called ‘Khārījites’.

against the Masarrīs could be understood as directed against Ibn Masarra's doctrine concerning the possibility of acquiring prophecy. But this doctrine is not specifically mentioned in the decrees.

The followers of Ibn Masarra who are known from the biographical dictionaries and considered to be *'ulamā'* (like Ibn Masarra himself) were, so it seems, not persecuted. The only exception appears to be a case of persecution in Pechina (Almería), where what happened may be connected with the peculiar mode of Islamization of this town.²⁹ In 350/961, the *faqīh* (later qadī) Ibn Yabqā granted a number of persons, who seem to have belonged to the Masarrīs of Córdoba, the opportunity to repent, and had their books burnt.³⁰ In the same period the Masarrīs, in their turn, attacked the Mālikī *fuqahā'*, whose doctrines had been accorded 'official status' by the caliph. They accused the Mālikīs of having abandoned both Koranic and prophetic precepts, and forced them to defend their doctrine in scholarly debate,³¹ which indicates that the Masarrīs were still very active.

In spite of persecution, Ibn Masarra's followers did not disappear.³² There was a community of them in Almería in the first half of the fifth/eleventh century. Their leader, Ismā'īl al-Ru'aynī, is described by Ibn Ḥazm as claiming prophecy, predicting future events, being considered *imām* of the community, receiving money (*zakāt*) from his followers as a consequence, and considering all those who did not adhere to his community to be unbelievers.³³

Thus, opposition to Ibn Masarra took the form of scholarly debate in a period of intellectual ferment marked by eschatological speculation.³⁴ Different, even mutually exclusive, views of Islam (*ra'y*, *ḥadīth*, Mu'tazilism, Sufism) were competing with one another.

²⁹ See P. Guichard, *Les musulmans de Valence et la Reconquête (XIe-XIIIe siècles)* (Damascus 1990-1991) 279, 285.

³⁰ A figure suspected of Masarrism was Mundhir b. Sa'īd al-Ballūṭī, who held the post of judge of Córdoba when Ibn Yabqā persecuted the Masarrīs. The sources do not specify whether al-Ballūṭī was persecuted at this time but mention only that he was censored and punished at an unspecified moment.

³¹ See M. Fierro, 'Los mālīkīs de al-Andalus y los dos árbitros (*al-ḥakamān*)', *Al-Qanṭara* vi (1985) 79-102.

³² Fierro, 'Una refutación'. Ibn Yabqā himself conducted the funerary prayers for a Masarrī.

³³ See Fierro, *Heterodoxia* 166-8. We do not know whether the earlier Masarrīs also paid *zakāt* to their Imam.

³⁴ M. Fierro, 'Mahdisme et eschatologie dans al-Andalus', in A. Kaddouri, *Mahdisme. Crise et changement dans l'histoire du Maroc* (Rabat 1994) 49-50, 56-7.

None managed to eliminate the others, primarily because the ruler, due to his political weakness, was motivated to keep the competition alive. Persecution began once political unity had been achieved, after the proclamation of the Umayyad caliphate when the new caliph became interested in imposing religious uniformity. This stage was marked by the execution of a son of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III called ʿAbd Allāh al-Zāhid, who was a Shāfiʿite. He was beheaded after having been accused of conspiring against his father.³⁵ Shāfiʿism, which was closely linked with the aspirations of the *ahl al-ḥadīth*, never recovered from this setback. The Mālikīs, the former *ahl al-raʿy*, were henceforth supported by the caliph. Two years later, the first edict against the followers of Ibn Masarra inaugurated the persecution.

As an intellectual, esoteric and rigoristic movement, Masarrism stressed the attainment of personal spiritual perfection through such means as living outside towns in secluded places where adherents were free from the direct control of the Muslim authorities.³⁶ Their belief in the possibility of attaining prophecy, of having direct contact with God, could also lead them to dispense with the Prophet, whose heritage was distributed between the caliph and the *ʿulamāʾ*. Mistrust of the figure of the saint, especially when he was endowed with the power to perform miracles, is evident in the scholarly debate that took place on this issue during the times of the vizier al-Manṣūr b. Abī ʿĀmir (second half of the fourth/tenth century). The debate degenerated into civil strife (*fitna*), and al-Manṣūr sent the *ʿulamāʾ* involved into exile. It is clear that the figure of the saint was seen as a rival form of authority. One of the consequences of this episode was that the *ʿulamāʾ* decided not to talk openly about the *karāmāt al-awliyāʾ*.³⁷ This restraint is one of the reasons for the scarcity of biographical literature devoted specifically to the *zuhhād*, *nussāk* and Sufis in al-Andalus, many of whom were assimilated into the *ṭabaqāt al-ʿulamāʾ* without specifying their 'saintly' attributes.

The Masarrīs considered themselves to be the true believers, and they were accused of denying 'fellowship' to the other Muslims. This could be seen as a potential cause for civil strife and political rebellion. The caliph, by dint of his right to decide with the help of

³⁵ See Fierro, *Heterodoxia* 127.

³⁶ We do not know the nature of these 'secluded places'. The recently discovered *rābiṭa* of Guardamar seems to belong to the caliphal period and may have been such a site; see R. Azuar, *La rābiṭa califal de las dunas de Guardamar (Alicante). Cerámica. Epigrafía. Fauna. Malacofauna* (Alicante 1989). It is more likely, however, that it was an 'official' building.

³⁷ Fierro, 'The polemic about the *karāmāt al-awliyāʾ*' 249.

the *ahl al-sunna* who is and who is not a Muslim, intervened to maintain both the unity of the community and his own authority. The actions against the Masarrīs were not indiscriminate attacks on Sufism,³⁸ but rather the outcome of a specific political and social constellation. Those who were only Muʿtazilis were not persecuted, nor were those who devoted themselves to asceticism, even in groups, Yaḥyā b. Mujāhid b. ʿAwāna al-Fazārī al-Ilbīrī³⁹ or who held Sufi views as individuals.

Two of the most important representatives of Andalusī Sufism, Ibn Barrajān and Ibn al-ʿArīf, died in 536/1141 after being recalled to Marrakesh by the Almoravid ruler, who obviously perceived some kind of threat from them.⁴⁰ Three years later (539/1144), the revolt of Ibn Qasī and his Sufi novices (*murīdūn*) took place in the West of al-Andalus. The spread of Sufism in al-Andalus represented by these figures has been explained as due to al-Ghazālī's influence,⁴¹ which is also meant to have had an effect on Ibn Tūmart,⁴² the leader of the Almohad movement that put an end to Almoravid rule in the Maghreb shortly after Ibn Qasī's rebellion. Contrary to what Asín Palacios believed, Ibn Masarra's doctrines do not seem to have had any influence on those Andalusī Sufis.⁴³

Sufism had spread in al-Andalus already during the first half of the fifth/eleventh century, as is clear from the attacks directed against it by Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064). Its flourishing in the first half of the

³⁸ Political action, combined with ascetic and theological beliefs, could meet with direct responses as seen in the case of Abū'l-Khayr, during al-Ḥakam II's reign (350-66/961-76); see Fierro, *Heterodoxia* 151-2.

³⁹ E.g. the group of ascetics around Yaḥyā b. Mujāhid b. ʿAwāna al-Fazārī al-Ilbīrī (d. 366/976). On him see Marín, 'Zuhhād' 457-9.

⁴⁰ I will not deal with the third man persecuted at the time, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā b. Bishr al-Anṣārī al-Mayūrqī, a Ṣāḥirī, as I am not convinced he was inclined towards Sufism. My impression is that he was associated with mysticism simply because he was persecuted together with Ibn al-ʿArīf and Ibn Barrajān.

⁴¹ See for example A. Bel, 'Le sufisme en Occident musulman au XIIe et au XIIIe siècle de J.C.', *Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales* (Alger) i (1934-5) 145-161; and A. Demerseeiman, 'Le Maghreb a-t-il une marque ghazzalienne?', *IBLA* lxxxii (1958) 109-16.

⁴² On such influence see the recent studies (where mention can be found of previous works) by A. ben Hammadi, 'Encore sur la rencontre entre Gazālī et Ibn Tūmart', *IBLA* clvi (1985), 32-9; D. Urvoy, 'Les divergences théologiques entre Ibn Tūmart et Gazālī', *Mélanges offerts à Mohamed Talbi à l'occasion de son 70e anniversaire*, vol. ii (La Manouba 1993) 203-212. I agree with those scholars who think that the encounter between Ibn Tūmart and al-Ghazālī is legendary.

⁴³ In this connection see Addas, 'Andalusī mysticism', 925.

sixth/twelfth century is the culmination of developments that had taken place during the fifth/eleventh:⁴⁴ various works in the field of asceticism and mysticism, especially those of al-Qushayrī (d. 464/1072),⁴⁵ were in circulation, and ‘*ulamā*’ such as Abū ‘Umar b. Lubb al-Ṭalamankī (d. 428/1036 or 429/1037), whose interest in *uṣūl al-dīn* and in Sufism were closely connected, aimed at the absorption of Sufism into mainstream Islam.⁴⁶ At the same time, the scant information that can be gleaned from the sources reveals a variety of Sufi beliefs. Alongside the kind of ‘orthodox’ Sufism represented by al-Muḥāsibī and even by al-Qushayrī, other Sufi beliefs met with criticism or rejection. The latter included the belief that saints could perform miracles; that prophecy could be acquired through spiritual perfection; that saints could be superior to prophets; that some saints were exempt from performing the religious duties and could even perform forbidden acts; that saints beheld God and talked to Him.

Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Ilbīrī, an ascetic and preacher, stated that saints, like the Prophet, are not obliged to pay *zakāt*. Ibn Ḥazm, who heard al-Ilbīrī preaching in Almería, thought that his sermons were full of error, but did not dare to refute him out of fear that the populace (*al-‘amma*) would react violently against him. Ismā‘īl al-Ru‘aynī, the Masarrī leader of Pechina, also held ‘unorthodox’ views about *zakāt* and property. He maintained that *zakāt* had to be paid to him, and that every kind of property, in whatever way it was obtained, was contaminated, whereas only income necessary for daily sustenance was licit.

Thus, al-Andalus at the beginning of the sixth/eleventh century was characterized by an atmosphere which facilitated the reception of al-Ghazālī’s works, especially the *Iḥyā’*. Indeed, two of the most influential *fuqahā*’ of the period, al-Ṭurṭūshī (d. 520/1126) and Abū Bakr b. al-‘Arabī (d. 543/1148), were attracted to al-Ghazālī’s doctrines. They tried to imitate the *Iḥyā*⁴⁷ and later became its

⁴⁴ This overview of Sufism during the fifth/eleventh century follows M. Fierro, ‘Religión’, in *Los Reinos de Taifas. Historia de España fundada por R. Menéndez Pidal y dirigida por J.M. Jover* (Madrid 1994) viii/1, 437.

⁴⁵ See J.M. Vizcaíno, ‘Las obras de *zuhd* en al-Andalus’, *Al-Qanṭara* xii (1991) 417–38.

⁴⁶ See M. Fierro, ‘El proceso contra Abū ‘Umar al-Ṭalamankī a través de su vida y de su obra’, *Sharq al-Andalus* ix (1992) 93–127.

⁴⁷ On their imitations see al-Ṭurṭūshī, *Kitāb al-hawāḍith wa’l-bida’* (*El libro de las novedades y las innovaciones*), traducción y estudio por M. Fierro. Fuentes Arabico-Hispanas 14 (Madrid 1993) 73–75. Hereafter quoted as Fierro, ‘Estudio al-Ṭurṭūshī.

critics.⁴⁸ Their contemporary, the Cordovan qadi Ibn Ḥamdīn (d. 508/1114) is alleged to have written a tract, which has not come down to us, refuting al-Ghazālī. He is held responsible by some for the burning of al-Ghazālī's writings.⁴⁹ Yet, other sources mention that the Almoravid sultan, ʿAlī b. Yūsuf b. Tāshufīn (500-37/1106-43), ordered the book burning in 503/1109, and threatened all those who possessed al-Ghazālī's books with death and confiscation of their property.⁵⁰ Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Barjī (d. 509/1115),⁵¹ a *faqīh* from Almería, wrote a fatwa opposing the burning, which shows that the *fuqahāʾ* were not a cohesive group in their attitude towards al-Ghazālī's works. Later on, in 538/1143, there was another move against al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ*, this time clearly instigated by the ruler.⁵² Al-Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ (d. 544/1149) and Ibn Ḥirzihim (d. 559/1165) issued fatwas in favour of burning the *Iḥyāʾ*.⁵³ Al-Ṭurṭūshī, at some point in his life, also declared himself in favour of burning al-Ghazālī's books the same way the Prophet's Companions had burned those copies of the Koran which deviated from ʿUthmān's copy.⁵⁴

The context in which Ibn Barrajan, Ibn al-ʿArīf, and Ibn Qasī were active was therefore familiar with Sufi trends, be it in favour or against. Both Abū'l-Ḥakam b. Barrajan and Abū'l-ʿAbbās b. al-ʿArīf

⁴⁸ For another alleged refutation of al-Ghazālī written by Muḥammad b. Khalaf al-Awsī (d. 537/1142) see D. Urvoy, 'Le manuscrit ar. 1483 de l'Escorial et la polémique contre Ghazālī dans al-Andalus', *Arabica* xl (1993) 114-119.

⁴⁹ The Banū Ḥamdīn were an important family of Córdoba, with many qadis among its members. Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Ḥamdīn (439-508/1060-1114) is usually identified as the refuter of al-Ghazālī, because his dates match the date of the reaction of al-Barjī (d. 509/1115). However, Muḥyi'l-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī identifies Ibn Ḥamdīn's son, Abū'l-Qāsim Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (d. 521/1127) as the 'Ibn Ḥamdīn' who wrote a refutation of al-Ghazālī and was responsible for the burning of the latter's books; see *Rūḥ/Durra*, no. 40.

⁵⁰ See al-Marrākushī, *Muʿjib*, ed. R. Dozy (Leiden 1881) 123; transl. E. Fagnan (Alger 1893) 148-9. See also S. Ghrāb, 'Ḥawla iḥrāq al-murābiṭīn *Iḥyāʾ* al-Ghazālī', in *Actas del IV Coloquio Hispano-Tunecino (Palma de Mallorca, 1979)* (Madrid 1983) 133-63. Ghrāb doubts that the burning really took place.

⁵¹ See M. Asín Palacios, *Abenmasarra y su escuela. Orígenes de la filosofía hispanomusulmana* (Madrid 1914); repr. in vol. i of M. Asín Palacios, *Obras escogidas* (Madrid 1946) 1-216; repr. in M. Asín Palacios, *Tres estudios sobre pensamiento y mística hispanomusulmanes* (Madrid 1992); *The Mystical Philosophy of Ibn Masarra and His Followers*, transl. by E.H. Douglas and H.W. Yoder (Leiden 1978) 109, note 1.

⁵² Letter of Tāshufīn b. ʿAlī to the people of Valencia, edited by Ḥ. Muʿnis, 'Nuṣūṣ siyāsiyya ʿan fatrat al-intiqāl min al-murābiṭīn ilā'l-muwahḥidīn', *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos* iii (1955) 107-113, and analyzed by D. Cabanelas, 'Notas para la historia de Algazel en España', *Al-Andalus* xvii (1952) 223-232.

⁵³ See al-Zabīdī al-Murtaḍā, *Iḥāf sādāt al-muttaqīn* (Cairo 1893) i, 27.

⁵⁴ Fierro, *Estudio al-Ṭurṭūshī* 64.

were 'second-generation' Andalusīs, their fathers having come to al-Andalus from North Africa.⁵⁵ Ibn Barrajān was active in Seville and Ibn al-°Arif in Almería. Both were literate and wrote books in which they presented their doctrines; but neither appears to have received training as a *faqīh*.⁵⁶ Ibn Barrajān wrote a *Tafsīr al-qurʿān* from a Sufi perspective, which contained predictions of future events (like the conquest of Jerusalem by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn), and a commentary on the names of God,⁵⁷ a subject which interested Sufis who wished to acquire the qualities and characteristics inherent in those names. Ibn Barrajān is said to have been considered *imām* in 130 villages,⁵⁸ which probably refers to spiritual leadership, not leadership of an actual political rebellion. But even if his imamate were only religious, the considerable extent of his influence would have been perceived by the political authorities as dangerous. This would explain why Ibn Barrajān was recalled to Marrakesh by the Almoravid sultan, at a date when the Almohads were threatening the Almoravid empire in the Maghreb.

Ibn al-°Arif considered Ibn Barrajān as his teacher and addressed him in his letters as *shaykhī wa-kabīrī*. Other teachers of Ibn al-°Arif were al-Barjī, who had opposed the burning of al-Ghazālī's works, and °Abd al-Baqī b. Muḥammad b. Burriyāl, a pupil of al-Ṭalamankī, a scholar of Sufi tendencies who had been persecuted as the leader of his community of followers.⁵⁹ Ibn al-°Arif obviously had spiritual authority over all those who wrote to him asking for advice.⁶⁰ His followers appear to have been mostly city-dwellers, who sought spiritual advice on such questions as the coming of the

⁵⁵ Much scholarship on Islam in al-Andalus assumes either explicitly or implicitly that within the Andalusī population the Berbers were more attracted to 'heterodox' beliefs than the Arab or native elements. Ethnic background, however, is often unknown, and social background would no doubt be a more relevant variable to consider: Ibn Barrajān and Ibn al-°Arif were only second generation Andalusīs and therefore did not belong to an established elite concerned to perpetuate old ways of doing things. Furthermore, the Sufi Ibn Qasī was of local origin and his doctrines were more extremist than those of Ibn Barrajān and Ibn al-°Arif.

⁵⁶ Ibn al-°Arif was included by Ibn Bashkuwāl in his *ṭabaqāt* of Andalusī scholars. Ibn Barrajān was not, but was 'integrated' later in Ibn al-Abbār's work.

⁵⁷ The commentary has been edited by Purificación de la Torre as a Ph.D. Diss. in the University Complutense of Madrid (1996), under the supervision of M.J. Viguera.

⁵⁸ See al-Shaʿrānī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Cairo 1299) i, 15, and Addas, 'Andalusī mysticism' 921.

⁵⁹ On him, see the reference in note 46.

⁶⁰ See his *Miftāḥ al-saʿāda* for some of these *rasāʾil*.

Mahdi⁶¹ and the obedience due to the *ṣulṭān*.⁶² Ibn al-ʿArīf seems to have been persecuted because of the denunciation of the qadi of Almería, Ibn Aswad, who probably alerted the ruler to Ibn al-ʿArīf's connection with Ibn Barrajaṇ and the extent of his authority.

A contemporary of Ibn al-ʿArīf and Ibn Barrajaṇ was Abū'l-Qāsim Ibn Qasī (d. 546/1151). He was of *muwallad* origin and had been a tax-collector for the Almoravids. One day he sold his possessions, distributed the money as alms and took up a life of wandering. Eventually, he founded a *rābiṭa* in Jilla (in present-day southern Portugal) where he gathered his *murīdūn*. Nothing is known about his teachers, although he seems to have known al-Ghazālī's doctrines.⁶³ He rejected both reason and *fiqh* and stated that prophecy should be periodically revitalized by means of sanctity.⁶⁴ He taught that the authenticity and legitimacy of the *imām maʿṣūm* would not be based on the latter's genealogy, or his efficient organization, but would be due to the qualities of his character.⁶⁵ Ibn Qasī preached the coming of the Mahdi, and apparently he at first claimed to be the

⁶¹ See Ibn al-ʿArīf, *Miftāḥ* 212-3. Ibn al-ʿArīf's opinion was that 'No judicious man... and no Muslim who is not weak[-minded] is in favour of striking at the government and waiting for a mahdi to come and reform it' (Addas, 'Andalusi mysticism' 923). There is more evidence for the spread of the belief in the coming of the mahdi: Ibn Qasī's doctrines; a pupil of Ibn al-ʿArīf, ʿAtīq b. ʿIsā b. Aḥmad al-Khazraǧī (d. 548/1153) wrote a *Risāla fi'l-fitan wa'l-ashrāt* (see Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām* iv, 202); al-ʿUryābī, a teacher of Muḥyi'l-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī, thought that he had recognized *al-mahdī* in one of his contemporaries. For an attempt to explain why al-Andalus forms part of eschatological geography but is not the place where the mahdi will appear, see Fierro, 'Mahdisme' 64.

⁶² Ibn al-ʿArīf, *Miftāḥ* 170, 174, 179.

⁶³ See A.E. Afifi (al-ʿAfifi), 'Abū l-Qāsim Ibn Qasī wa-kitābuhu *Khalʿ al-naʿlayn*', *Majallat Kulliyat al-adab* (Alexandria) xi (1957) 53-87; as well as the more nuanced view in D.R. Goodrich, *A Sufi revolt in Portugal: Ibn Qasī and his Kitāb Khalʿ al-naʿlayn* (Ph.D. Diss. Columbia University 1978) 44. Ibn Qasī was thought to have been a pupil of Ibn al-ʿArīf, but the evidence shows that this was not the case. Nor was he a pupil of Ibn Barrajaṇ. His correspondence, as well as that of his follower Ibn Mundhir, with Ibn al-ʿArīf (years 525-29/1131-35) dates from the period when Ibn Qasī was already a Sufi and a person of influence in his region. See P. Nwyia, 'Notes sur quelques fragments inédits de la correspondance d'Ibn al-ʿArīf avec Ibn Barrajaṇ', *Hespéris* xliii (1956) 217-221, and his article in *al-Abḥāth* xxvii (1978-9) 43-56.

⁶⁴ Cornell, *Mirrors* 178, quoting Ibn Khaldūn.

⁶⁵ J. Dreher, 'L'imamat d'Ibn Qasī à Mértola (automne 1144-été 1145): Légitimité d'une domination soufie?', *Mélanges de l'Institut Dominicain d'Études Orientales du Caire* xviii (1988) 203 ('Ainsi l'imāmat d'après Ibn Qasī repose sur l'expérience subjective de la vocation reçue sous forme d'une vision or audition et sur les qualités objectivement constatables de l'imām'). See also V. Lagardière, 'La *Ṭarīqa* et la révolte des Murīdīn en 539H/1144 en al-Andalus', *Revue de l'Occident Musulmane et la Méditerranée* xxxv (1983) 157-70.

Mahdi himself, though after his contact with the Almohads he renounced this claim. He also wrote a tract entitled *Kitāb khal' al-na'layn*, which gives prominence to eschatological elements.⁶⁶ Some sources say that he performed miracles.⁶⁷ Ibn Qasī led a rebellion in Mértola in 539/1144 and ruled for one year. He then lost his position to a political, not a religious leader, and sought refuge with the Almohads, with whom he returned to al-Andalus in 541/1147. A few years later he tried to make an alliance with the Christians and was killed in 546/1151 by some of his own followers. At the beginning of his rebellion he had followers in many parts of al-Andalus. The threat which his revolt posed to the traditional forms of political legitimacy and authority is underscored by the fact that the revolt of the judge Ibn Ḥamdīn in Córdoba in 539/1145, which provoked a series of rebellions against the Almoravids in other towns, took place after Ibn Qasī's revolt and seems to have been motivated by a desire to stop Sufis of Ibn Qasī's type from seizing power.

Ibn Qasī's abandonment of his worldly career in favour of what appears to have been a quest for the spiritual, is not unique for the period but accords with a well-established pattern found among his contemporaries. One of his followers, Ibn al-Mundhir, had been trained as a *faqīh* and was a qadi under the Almoravids, but he also abandoned his previous life-style and retired to a *ribāṭ* near the sea in Silves.⁶⁸ Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Lūrqi (d. circa 550/1155)⁶⁹ had served the Almoravids in Marrakesh as secretary, but ended by disliking this form of service. After his return to his home town, Murcia, he devoted himself to an ascetic life, maintained contact with the mystics (*fuqarā'*) and corresponded with Ibn al-ʿArīf. During the revolt against the Almoravids, he was proclaimed *amīr* of Murcia and

⁶⁶ Ibn Qasī's doctrine shows traces of syncretism. For example, he believed that at the beginning of the hereafter, Jesus and John the Baptist will accompany Muḥammad on the pulpit. The unusual practice of Ibn Qasī's followers of having the preacher of the Friday sermon flanked by two men, one on each side, seems to be based on this belief; Goodrich, *A Sufi Revolt* 45, 56-7. As a Sufi thinker, he was judged rather negatively by other Sufis; see Addas, 'Andalusī mysticism' 927.

⁶⁷ Dreher, 'L'imāmat d'Ibn Qasī' 210, note 47, quoting Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl* (Ibn Qasī performed the pilgrimage during the night, communicated in the form of *munājāt* with whomever he wished, etc.).

⁶⁸ See A. Sidas, 'Novos dados sobre Ibn Qasī de Silves e as taifas almorávidas no Gharb al-Andalus', in *I Jornadas de Silves Actas. Silves* (3 e 4 de Setembro 1992) (Silves 1992) 35-40.

⁶⁹ See M. Fierro, 'The qāḍī as ruler', in *Saber religioso y poder político* (Madrid 1994) 97.

acknowledged Ibn Ḥamdīn, but soon renounced any political commitment. °Abd al-Ghafūr b. Ismāʿīl b. Khalaf al-Sakūnī studied with Ibn al-°Arīf and Ibn Barraġān. Although °Abd al-Ghafūr was a member of an important family of Niebla, he chose to live with the bare necessities, giving away any surplus to the poor; he performed miracles and his prayers were answered by God. He travelled to the East around the year 540/1145, apparently in order to escape from the civil strife of the time.⁷⁰ In line with this pattern of spiritual quest, even the Almoravid ruler Tāshufīn b. °Alī b. Yūsuf (537-39/1143-45 or 541/1147) is described as being inclined towards Sufism and as having read the writings of the *murīdūn*.⁷¹

By way of explaining the appeal of Sufism during the latter days of the Almoravid Empire, I would like to make the following observations. Fear and a sense of insecurity spread as the Almoravids proved unable to stop the Christian conquest, while simultaneously military requirements (both offensive and defensive) led to an increase of the same illegal taxes the Almoravids had promised to abolish when they dethroned the Taifa kings. This was accompanied by a concern for deeper religious experience. The spiritual crisis and the resulting search for new types of religious authority appear to be due to the failure of the *°ulamā* to meet the high expectations of moral renewal which the Almoravids had aroused, even if the *°ulamā* themselves had experienced and were experiencing many changes.⁷² There was disillusionment with existing patterns of life and that disillusionment was not being remedied by traditional forms of authority. There was a social need for a new type of authority, the Sufi master, in opposition to the traditional authorities of the scholar (*°ālim*) or the *faqīh*, and that need spread from the towns (where Ibn Barraġān and Ibn al-°Arīf were active) to the countryside where their influence was also felt. If the Sufi master met the need for a new type of authority, it was partly because he embodied certain moral qualities, whereas the *°ulamā* and *fuqahā* were criticized for the fact that they did not lead a model virtuous life, which weakened

⁷⁰ Ibn al-Zubayr, *Ṣilat al-ṣila*, ed. °Abd al-Salām al-Harrās and S. A°rāb (Rabat 1414/1994) iv, 38, no 50.

⁷¹ He is also said to have visited the tomb of Abū Wahb (the Sufi of the fourth/tenth century mentioned above): see Kassīs, "Iyād's doctrinal views" 51. The Almoravid ruler Tāshufīn is the author of the letter against al-Ghazālī sent to the people of Valencia (see note 52). This indicates that criticism of al-Ghazālī did not necessarily go hand in hand with rejection of Sufism.

⁷² The best example is Abū Bakr b. al-°Arabī.

their position as interpreters of God's law.⁷³ But this shift was also partly due to a reaction against the impersonal and institutional framework of *fiqh*-oriented religious observance. This view of religion was becoming replaced by a search for a personal link between creature and creator (dreams, miracles, visions) embodied in the Sufi master. The latter had the additional advantage of belonging to two worlds: on the one hand, he had access to the 'high tradition' of the 'ulamā' and on the other he was closer to practices and beliefs of the 'little tradition' of the people. It is in this period as well that we find the first examples of Sufis developing views concerning social problems.⁷⁴

After this overview of Andalusī Sufism during Almoravid and Almohad times, we shall now analyze the criticism made against al-Ghazālī, Ibn Barrajān, Ibn al-ʿArīf and Ibn Qasī. The specifics of al-Ṭurṭūshī's criticism of al-Ghazālī are found in his two works, *Risāla ilā ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Muẓaffar* and *Kitāb al-asrār wa'l-ʿibar*.⁷⁵ He reproaches al-Ghazālī for quoting weak *aḥādīth* of doubtful veracity; for not clearly stating the necessity of 'ilm al-tawḥīd; for being influenced by the *Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-ṣafāʾ*, by philosophy and by al-Ḥallāj. Moreover, he criticized al-Ghazālī for maintaining that the Sufi form of listening to music (*samāʿ*) is permissible,⁷⁶ and for the

⁷³ The lack of legitimacy of the rulers also contributed to a decrease in the authority of religious scholars. For example, the ruler's failure in *jihād* negatively affected the status of jurists and scholars who received part of their income from the government.

⁷⁴ See F. Rodríguez Mañas, 'Hombres santos y recaudadores de impuestos en el occidente musulmán (VI-VIII/XII-XIV)', *Al-Qanṭara* xii (1991) 479; C. de la Puente, 'La familia de Abū Ishāq Ibn al-Ḥāṣṣ de Velefique', in *Estudios onomásticos-biográficos de al-Andalus* v., ed. M. Marín and J. Zanón (Madrid 1992) 316. In the sixth/twelfth century, there was not only tension between Sufism and *fiqh*-oriented Islam, but between Sufism and philosophy as well. On the opposition between the Andalusī philosophers (Ibn Bājjā, Ibn Ṭufayl, Ibn Rushd, etc.) and Sufism, see E. Tornero, 'La filosofía', in *Historia de España fundada por Ramón Menéndez Pidal y dirigida por J. Jover Zamora*, ed. J. Viguera (Madrid 1997) 587-602. Philosophy also influenced Sufism. Some Sufis, on the other hand, were suspicious of those involved in 'ulūm al-awāʾil.

⁷⁵ See Ghrāb, 'Ḥawla' 139-141 and 158-163; and Fierro, *Estudio Ṭurṭūshī* 61-4, no 19, for the *Risāla*; and al-Manūnī's article, 'Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn fī manẓūr al-gharb al-islāmī ayyām al-murābiṭīn wa'l-muwaḥḥidīn', in *Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī* (Rabat 1988) 125-137.

⁷⁶ Al-Ṭurṭūshī devoted one of his books to condemning the *samāʿ*. See on this issue A. Gribetz, 'The *samāʿ* controversy: Sufi vs. legalist', *Studia Islamica* lxxiv (1991) 43-62. Gribetz's study shows how the *samāʿ* was not generally accepted among the Sufis either. One of the dangers of *samāʿ* from the jurist's point of view was that it might supersede organized prayer, apart from the fact that *samāʿ* sessions are usually accompanied by other forbidden

objectionable material in some parts of the *Ihyā'*, such as in the sections devoted to the miracles of prophets and saints. Al-Ghazālī, according to al-Ṭurṭūshī, ceased to be an *ʿālim* but did not become a Sufī, since he did not understand Sufism. For his part, Abū Bakr b. al-ʿArabī, in his *Sirāj al-murīdīn*, attacked al-Ghazālī for using Sufi concepts such as *ʿishq*⁷⁷ and *shawq* that lack a basis in the sharia.⁷⁸ Ibn Ḥamdīn's refutation and other contemporary texts are unfortunately lost.⁷⁹

Modern scholars have advanced a variety of reasons for the opposition of the *fuqahā'* to al-Ghazālī's works. It should be pointed out, however, that the implied generalization is misleading: some *fuqahā'* opposed his works, while others did not. In Urvoy's view, al-Ghazālī's works were subjected to a syncretistic form of interpretation which was unacceptable to the Almoravids, apart from the fact that al-Ghazālī's position was rather eclectic to begin with.⁸⁰ A. ben Hammadi wonders whether burning al-Ghazālī's works was not due more to the fact that he was a Shāfiʿī than to his being a Sufi.⁸¹ According to other scholars, the opposition of the *fuqahā'* to al-Ghazālī was probably determined by the latter's attacks against the *fuqahā'*, accusing them of corruption and of cooperation with unjust rulers.⁸² Another explanation is that al-Ghazālī was seen as con-

practices. See also L. Pouzet, 'Prises de position autour du samā' en Orient Musulman au VIIe/XIIIe siècle', *Studia Islamica* lvii (1983) 119-134.

⁷⁷ For the rejection of this concept, see J.N. Bell, *Love Theory in Later Hanbalite Islam* (Albany 1979) 24-5.

⁷⁸ See Ibn al-ʿArif, *Miftāḥ al-saʿāda wa-taḥqīq tariq al-saʿāda*, ed. ʿIsmat ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Dandash (Beirut 1993) 47. Abū Bakr b. al-ʿArabī would also have objected to al-Ghazālī's acceptance of *samā'*, since he disapproved of music in general: as a qadi, Abū Bakr b. al-ʿArabī ordered the cheeks of a flutist to be perforated.

⁷⁹ Except for the text studied by Urvoy; see note 48.

⁸⁰ D. Urvoy, *Le monde des ulémas andalous du V/XIe au VII/XIIIe siècle* (Geneva 1978) 129-131; idem, *Pensers d'al-Andalus. La vie intellectuelle à Cordoue et Seville au temps des Empires Berbères (fin XIe siècle - début XIIIe siècle)* (Toulouse 1990) 167-175. Cf. J. Puig, 'Ibn Rushd versus al-Ghazālī: Reconsideration of a Polemic', *The Muslim World* lxxxii (1992) 113-31.

⁸¹ A. ben Hammadi, 'Hawla murūr Ibn Tūmart bi'l-Andalus fi tariqihi ilā'l-Mashriq', *Dirāsāt andalusīyya* vi (1411/1991) 20.

⁸² This seems to be the predominant view; see e.g. Nwyia, *Ibn ʿAbbād* 150; and F. Rodríguez Mañas, *El sufismo en Marruecos en los siglos XI-XIII: aspectos sociales y políticos* (Ph.D. Diss. Univ. Complutense Madrid 1992). A more nuanced discussion is found in Guichard, *Les musulmans de Valence* 85. I find this position unconvincing, since al-Ghazālī's attacks on the *fuqahā'* did not stop some of them, e.g. al-Ṭurṭūshī and Abū Bakr b. al-ʿArabī, from being attracted to his doctrines. When they criticized al-Ghazālī later, it was because they thought his doctrines were dangerous both in theory and in practice, not because they felt

nected with Ibn Tūmart,⁸³ the leader of the Almoravid movement which put an end to Almoravid rule in the Maghreb — Ibn Tūmart having learnt from al-Ghazālī the doctrine of *al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf*.⁸⁴ In any case, the idea that it was primarily an opposition on the part of the Mālikī *fuqahā'*, which in turn determined the Almoravid rulers' opposition, seems to predominate. My own view, however, is that the *fuqahā'* and the rulers were concerned with different things.

As for the opposition of a number of Maghribī *fuqahā'*, they judged that certain of al-Ghazālī's dogmatic positions were dangerous. They were especially disturbed by his acceptance of particular religious practices deemed suspect by Mālikīs (as shown in al-Ṭurṭūshī's criticism), as well as by his different criteria for ascertaining truth and knowledge.⁸⁵ Thus, their opposition to al-Ghazālī points to specific areas of conflict between jurists and Sufis. At the same time, however, not every *faqīh* or *ʿālim* agreed on the importance of such areas of conflict and on how to deal with them (cf. the example of al-Barjī, the *faqīh* of Almería, who opposed burning books by al-Ghazālī, mentioned above).

The variety of attitudes among the *fuqahā'* should not be overlooked, or for that matter the fact that during the same period the tendency towards assimilation of Sufism by the ulama continued. This is indicated by the incorporation of Sufi books into the 'reading lists' of the ulama⁸⁶ and by the emergence of *fuqahā'* with leanings towards Sufism,⁸⁷ although Muḥyī'l-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) considered the compound labels 'traditionist (*muḥaddith*) and Sufi'

under attack for being 'corrupt' and 'collaborators'. The latter charge had been made against the *fuqahā'* by non-Sufis and Sufis alike in the past; moreover, it was being made by contemporaries and would continue to be made in the future.

⁸³ See the articles by A. ben Hammadi and D. Urvoy mentioned in footnote 42; also for references to earlier publications.

⁸⁴ See M. García-Arenal, 'La práctica del precepto de *al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wa-l-nahy ʿan al-munkar* en la hagiografía magrebi', *Al-Qanṣara* xiii (1992) 147-170.

⁸⁵ Muḥyī'l-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī stated that a saint can accept a *ḥadīth* considered apocryphal by the scholars and reject a *ḥadīth* they considered authentic. He can do so because he is endowed with an internal certainty such as the Prophet had; see C. Addas, *Ibn ʿArabī ou La quête du Soufre Rouge* (Paris 1989) 127-8, who presents a clear example of this procedure followed by saints, contrary to the training of the *fuqahā'*.

⁸⁶ See Vizcaíno, op. cit.

⁸⁷ See the figures given in Urvoy, *Le monde des ulémas*. The detailed study of the specific cases still remains to be carried out. See also the emergence of *silsilas* which combine Sufis and *fuqahā'* (for example, a *silsila* which mentions al-Ghazālī and his two opponents — and former admirers — Abū Bakr b. al-ʿArabī and Ibn Ḥirzihim).

and 'jurist (*faqīh*) and ascetic' to be truly amazing combinations.⁸⁸ The process of assimilation progressed during the Almohad period, as illustrated by the efforts of an 'ālim like Ibn Bashkuwāl (d. 578/1183) to integrate the ulama into the new forms of religious authority which had less to do with 'ilm than with the ability to manipulate divine forces,⁸⁹ and to popularize practices usually associated with Sufis.⁹⁰ The portrayal of ulama with 'saintly' attributes is also to be found in the work by Tāhir al-Ṣadafī (alive between 552-72/1157-77).⁹¹ This book, together with the *Rūḥ al-quḍs* and *al-Durra al-fākhira* by Muḥyi'l-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240), allow us to penetrate the world of Andalusī Sufis and to see them in action.⁹²

A striking indication of this process of convergence and assimilation is a fatwa by the Mālikī *faqīh* Ibn Rushd al-Jadd (d. 520/1126), in which he discusses the categories of *al-ʿarifūn bi'llāh* and *al-ʿarifūn bi-aḥkām Allāh*⁹³ as found in al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ*. For al-Ghazālī, the former (the Sufis) have precedence over the latter (the jurists), and Ibn Rushd does not disagree, though he is himself a Mālikī and a *faqīh*.⁹⁴ Ibn Rushd, of course, would have disagreed

⁸⁸ Muḥyi'l-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī, *Rūḥ/Durra* no 38, 39, 45, 56. On this issue also see Bel, 'Le ṣūfisme' 153. A pupil of Ibn ʿAbbād, Yahyā al-Sarrāj (d. 803/1400 or 805/1403) was never able to conciliate his activities as a traditionist and as a Sufi: see Nwyia's book on Ibn ʿAbbād al-Rundi.

⁸⁹ Ibn Bashkuwāl wrote books on the excellent qualities of a number of scholars from al-Andalus (the jurists Shabṭūn and al-Qanāzī'i, and the ascetic/mystic Abū Wabb) and from the East (al-A'mash, Ibn al-Mubārak, Ibn ʿUyayna, the Mālikī jurists Ibn al-Qāsim and Ismā'il al-Qāḍī, and the mystic al-Muḥāsibī). In addition, he wrote a variety of books with the aim of conveying knowledge about the special powers of scholars (e.g. his *Kitāb al-mustaghṭhīn*). He also collected criticism against the Sufis: see for example the biography of Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan al-Dimyāṭī in his *Ṣila*.

⁹⁰ See C. de la Puente's study in her edition of Ibn Bashkuwāl's *Kitāb al-qurba ilā rabb al-ʿālamīn* (El acercamiento a Dios) (Madrid 1998). This trend had already been started by Ibn Bashkuwāl's teacher, Abū ʿAlī al-Ṣadafī (d. 514/1120).

⁹¹ *Kitāb al-sirr al-maṣūn fīmā ukrīma bihi al-mukhlaṣūn*, contents and analysis given by F. Meier, 'Tāhir as-Ṣadafis vergessene Schrift über westliche Heilige des 6./12. Jahrhunderts', *Der Islam* lxi (1984) 14-90. H. Ferhat has prepared an edition of the text and published 'As-sirr al-maṣūn de Tāhir al-Ṣadafī: un itinéraire mystique au XIIe siècle', *Al-Qanṭara* xvi (1995), 273-288.

⁹² On the use of Muḥyi'l-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī's material see Addas, 'Ibn ʿArabī' 43, 151, 165-6, 197-8, 201-2, 206-7, 214, 223, 230, 233-4, 261 and 283-4, 264.

⁹³ *Fatāwā*, ed. al-Mukhtār b. al-Ṭāhir al-Talīlī (Beirut 1987) iii, 1624-29, no. 642.

⁹⁴ One of the arguments for the precedence of saints over scholars is that saints can perform miracles and therefore are superior to *fuqahāʾ*. Ibn Rushd had previously established that such miracles do exist; see Fierro, 'The polemic about *karāmāt al-awliyāʾ*' 239-242.

had the saints been given precedence over prophets, as that could be viewed as a way 'to open the gate to rejection of Islamic law, seen as founded by Muḥammad'.⁹⁵ That the ulama were aware of this danger is shown by the fact that the Mālikī al-Qāḍī 'Iyād found it necessary to write a book which was to become one of the most influential works in Islamic societies: his *al-Shifā' bi-ta'rif huqūq al-Muṣṭafā*. The objective of this work was to defend the privileges of the Prophet and to establish clearly his rank with regard to competing figures of authority.⁹⁶ The *fuqahā'* were fearful that Sufis would be channels for the penetration of the values and interests of the 'little tradition' into the 'great tradition'. What we have here, therefore, is a scholarly debate over religious authority. The debate was about a book, al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā'*, that the vast majority of Muslims could not read, and that was being used convincingly to claim textual support for certain beliefs such as *'ishq* and practices such as *samā'*. In Almohad times, al-Ghazālī's works were accepted,⁹⁷ but reservations continued to be expressed.⁹⁸

As far as the rulers' opposition to Sufism is concerned,⁹⁹ the latter could have chosen to support those *fuqahā'* who had Sufi inclinations, but the rulers were cautious in this regard, especially about the political use of Sufi doctrines (not only those of al-Ghazālī, which

Compare this to the references of Muḥyī'l-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī to contemporaries (one of them a philosopher, another a traditionist) who denied the possibility of miracles: Addas, *Ibn ʿArabī* 93, 135-6; Muḥyī'l-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī, *Durra* no. 8.

⁹⁵ Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, 40. On this issue see also M. Chodkiewicz, 'La sainteté et les saints en islam', in *Le culte des saints dans le monde musulman* (Paris 1995) 13-32.

⁹⁶ For example, *'isma* was an attribute of prophethood and in the sixth/twelfth century it was being attributed to the mahdi; see H. Kassis, 'ʿIyād's doctrinal views and their impact on the Maghreb', *The Maghreb Review* xiii (1988) 49-56. The portrayal of the Prophet in al-Andalus contains a marked tendency to stress his ascetic and even mystic behaviour; see Fierro, 'The polemic about the *karāmāt al-awliyā'*' 242-5.

⁹⁷ See Ibn Ṭumlūs' commentaries in Fierro, 'Heresy in al-Andalus', in S. Jayyusi (ed.) *The Legacy of Muslim Spain* (Leiden 1992) 895-908. A different interpretation of Ibn Ṭumlūs' text in Urvoy, 'Le manuscrit ar. 1483 de l'Escorial'.

⁹⁸ Al-Fishtālī (d. circa 660/1261) accepted the works by al-Muḥāsibī, but condemned the works of al-Qushayrī and al-Ghazālī, because doctrines of the latter on *'ilm al-ghayb* tended to lead people astray rather than educate them. For his part, al-Qabbāb (d. 779/1377) said that Sufis of his age read the section of the *Iḥyā'* devoted to *'ilm al-mukāshafāt* and that he would like to see someone abridge the *Iḥyā'* and eliminate that section and the numerous apocryphal *ḥadīths* it contained; see Nwyia, *Ibn ʿAbbād* 226.

⁹⁹ The Almoravid opposition to al-Ghazālī is somewhat surprising when we think that a letter of his had been used in the process of legitimizing Almoravid rule: see J. Viguera, 'Las cartas de al-Ġazālī y al-Ṭurṭūṣī al soberano almorávid Yūsuf b. Tāšufīn', *Al-Andalus* xlii (1977) 341-374.

were not particularly dangerous¹⁰⁰). Ibn al-ʿArif's doctrine concerning the ruler was one of submission, even cooperation, and not confrontation, and we have seen that Ibn Barraġān's imamate was a spiritual one. However, it is in their religious and social influence that the rationale for Ibn Barraġān's and Ibn al-ʿArif's persecution should be sought, not in their writings which were never attacked or refuted (as far as we know), and which, in the case of Ibn al-ʿArif's work, contained only 'mild' Sufism.¹⁰¹ There is no evidence that either of them tried to organize their followers in any way,¹⁰² as Ibn Qasī did. Therefore, I take what late sources state to the effect that the Almoravid rulers feared that Ibn Barraġān and Ibn al-ʿArif might start a rebellion like that of Ibn Tūmart, to have been just that, a fear. Real danger was embodied in the person of Ibn Qasī and his short-lived imamate. Curiously enough, this danger the Almoravid ruler seems to have overlooked.

The opposition of some *fuqahāʾ* to certain trends of Sufism deemed to be dangerous (again, not to Sufism *per se*) took the form of scholarly debate. Refutations were written, but only against al-Ghazālī, not against Ibn al-ʿArif or Ibn Barraġān.¹⁰³ Imitations of al-Ghazālī's *Ihyāʾ* were also written, which indicates that the work itself was considered as catering for certain religious needs. At the same time, there was a recasting of the figure of the *ʿālim* with certain attributes of the Sufi. I see all this as an effort directed at making Sufism 'complementary' to *fiqh* and *ʿilm*, and as an attempt to address some of the needs which were causing people to turn to new types of religious authority. This does not mean that all the be-

¹⁰⁰ See Guichard, *Les musulmans de Valence* 86, which shows how al-Ghazālī's doctrines were well adapted to Almoravid rule. I have not been able to consult M. Hogga, *Orthodoxie, subversion et réforme en Islam. Ghazālī et les Selġūqides suivi de textes politiques de Ghazālī* (Paris 1993).

¹⁰¹ See B. Halff, 'Le Maġāsin al-maġālis d'Ibn al-ʿArif et l'oeuvre du soufi ħanbalite al-Anṣārī', *Revue des Études Islamiques* xxxix (1971) 321-335. R. Bulliet's comments on Ibn al-ʿArif's work in his *Islam. The view from the edge* (New York 1994) 170, are outdated (he does not seem to be aware of Halff's study which has changed our understanding of the 'originality' of Ibn al-ʿArif's work, apart from the fact that Bulliet accepts certain 'extremist' passages as written by Ibn al-ʿArif, when they are an interpolation according to Asín Palacios).

¹⁰² C. Addas, 'Ibn ʿArabī et al-Andalus', *II Jornadas de Cultura islāmica. Aragón vive su historia*. Teruel, 1988 (Madrid 1990) 91-100. Addas states that, while in the East there was a progressive structuring of Sufism, in Andalusī Sufism 'la quête de Dieu reste encore largement une entreprise purement individuelle, libre et souple'; 'Ibn ʿArabī' 91.

¹⁰³ Actually, their works enjoyed a wide diffusion throughout the Islamic world as shown by the number of extant manuscripts in the case of Ibn Barraġān and by the number of references in the bibliographical dictionaries in the case of Ibn al-ʿArif.

liefs and practices found in Sufi circles were accepted or incorporated. The process involved fluidity, tension, an ongoing 'orthodoxy-in-the-making', to borrow Knysh's expression.¹⁰⁴ The available evidence shows that, contrary to what has often been claimed and is still frequently repeated,¹⁰⁵ the Andalusī ulama were flexible, alert to new social demands and eager to avoid social conflict by adapting what could be adapted. What I perceive some of the ulama as trying to do is to avoid the emergence of an unbridgeable dichotomy between *fiqh* and 'acceptable' *taṣawwuf*.¹⁰⁶

The Sufis had various political attitudes: some cooperated with the established rulers or at least avoided confrontation, some confronted the rulers by word and some did so by action. This last position is represented by the case of Ibn Qasī. According to Ibn Khaldūn, he and his *murīdūn* failed because they lacked the support of an ethnic group. But one might also see their failure as due to the strength of the 'ulamā' in al-Andalus and the latter's ability to adapt. Part of Andalusī society reacted to Ibn Qasī's rebellion against the Almoravids by investing the qadis with political and military power,¹⁰⁷ thereby counteracting the 'political' Sufi with the *faqīh*.

By the end of the sixth/twelfth century, Sufism was well-established in al-Andalus. Well-known mystics such as Ibn al-Mar'a (d. 611/1215), Ibn Sab'īn (d. 669/1270), his pupil al-Shushtarī (d. 668/1269), and Abū Marwān al-Yuḥānisī (d. 667/1268) thrived during the subsequent century. Al-Shushtarī's doctrines of philosophical Sufism were considered suspect,¹⁰⁸ and al-Yuḥānisī was

¹⁰⁴ A. Knysh, 'Orthodoxy and heresy in Medieval Islam: an essay in reassessment', *The Muslim World* lxxxiii (1993) 48-67.

¹⁰⁵ For example, see Baldick, *Mystical Islam* 69-71: 'What is known about Islamic Spain up to the early twelfth century is that there was an immense intolerance on the level of ideas: even the works of the sober Muhammad Ghazali were burnt.'

¹⁰⁶ Ibn Khaldūn's criticism of al-Ghazālī was precisely that the latter did not prevent the emergence of such a dichotomy; on the contrary, he would have promoted it and, by promoting it, he would have opened the way for the creation of Sufi orders as independent and autonomous structures; see E. Chaumont, 'Notes et commentaires', *Studia Islamica* lxiv (1986) 151-7.

¹⁰⁷ See Fierro, 'The *qāḍī* as ruler'.

¹⁰⁸ See A.W. al-Taftāzānī, 'Al-Madrasa al-shūdhīyya fi'l-taṣawwuf al-andalusī', *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos* xxiii (1985) 173-181. The author collects the arguments of the *fuqahā'* against Ibn Sab'īn's and al-Shushtarī's doctrines, including the accusation that Ibn Sab'īn did not feel obliged to follow the religious norms of the sharia. See also Fierro, 'Mahdisme et eschatologie' 62, for Ibn Sab'īn's political doctrine which could have been considered dangerous. In the above article, I follow Massignon's view on this issue:

among the first to engage in the much debated practice of celebrating the *mawlid al-nabī*.¹⁰⁹ We also meet with Sufis such as the Sabʿīnī Ibn Aḥlā (d. 645/1247) and al-Fazārī (alive in 666/1267), who held political power for brief periods.¹¹⁰ Among the many Andalusīs who emigrated in this period and later, we also find Sufis such as Ibn ʿĀshir (d. 764/1362) and Ibn ʿAbbād al-Rundī (d. 792/1390). Both were representatives of a ‘moderate’ Sufism which opposed extreme doctrines involving *ḥulūl* and *ittiḥād*, both renounced *karāmāt* and collaborated with the rulers.¹¹¹ One of their contemporaries who was active in al-Andalus was Ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1374). This famous historian, poet and *faqīh*, was also the author of a treatise on Sufism.¹¹² Another of their contemporaries was Abūʾl-Barakāt al-Balafiqī (d. 771/1370), a descendant of the Sufi Ibn al-Ḥājj (d. 616/1219).¹¹³ The change in standards of Sufi behaviour are illustrated by the specific observation that al-Balafiqī, unlike his ancestor, did not perform miracles.

During the eighth/fourteenth century, Granada was a center of attraction for Sufis from other regions of the Islamic world as far off as Persia.¹¹⁴ Many of the foreign Sufis were merchants such as the Tunisian al-Khalfāwī al-Tamīmī (d. 715/1315), who settled in Granada and devoted his life to the distribution of alms to the poor.¹¹⁵ Sufism and commerce were closely connected,¹¹⁶ and the network of

that Ibn Sabʿīn’s concept of *muḥaqqiq* should be interpreted as ‘messianisme politique’. I wish to thank M. Chodkiewicz for pointing out to me his reservations concerning Massignon’s interpretation.

¹⁰⁹ See N.J.G. Kaptein, *Muḥammad’s Birthday Festival. Early history in the Central Muslim lands and development in the Muslim West until the 10th/16th century* (Leiden 1993) 139.

¹¹⁰ Fierro, ‘Mahdisme et eschatologie’ 62.

¹¹¹ Nwyia, *Ibn ʿAbbād* xliii, 29, 47 (note 1 and cf. 67) 52, 99, 118 (note 2) 141, 153. As regards the renunciation of *karāmāt*, Ibn ʿAbbād himself told the story of a man who wanted to use Ibn ʿAbbād’s *baraka* to cure his daughter. The man lost both his daughter and his son (ibid. 163; see also 223-4).

¹¹² See de E. Santiago, ‘Jatībiana mística I: El Kitāb Rawḍat al-Taʿrīf. Su temática’, in *Andalucía Islámica, Textos y Estudios* i (1980) 105-122.

¹¹³ See de la Puente, ‘La familia’ 340 and cf. 318-323

¹¹⁴ See Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla* (Cairo 1383/1964) ii, 190; Spanish transl. S. Fanjul and F. Arbós (Madrid 1981) 765.

¹¹⁵ See M.J. Rubiera, ‘Un aspecto de las relaciones entre la Ifriqiya Ḥafsi y la Granada Naṣrī: la presencia tunecina en las ṭariqāt místicas granadinas’, *Cahiers de Tunisie* xxvi (1978) 172, who points out that Granada was overpopulated (at least until the plague of 1348) due to the presence of Muslims coming from the territories conquered by the Christians.

¹¹⁶ On Naṣrid Granada as a center of international commerce see R. Arié, *L’Espagne musulmane au temps des Nasrides (1232-1492)* (Paris 1973) 360-3.

zāwiyas and *ribāṭs* which covered the territory of the Naṣrid kingdom catered not only for the needs of merchants and travellers, but also for those of the local population.

It is difficult to establish when Sufi *ṭarīqas* as organized groups, owning property and regulating the succession of their leaders, came into being in al-Andalus.¹¹⁷ In any case, during the Naṣrid period we know of the existence of at least two *ṭarīqas*.

One of the two known *ṭarīqas* was the Banū Sīdī Būna *ṭarīqa*, which was active in the quarter of Albaicín in Granada.¹¹⁸ The founder of the order was considered to be Abū Aḥmad Jaʿfar b. ʿAbd Allāh (d. 624/1227), who had been a pupil of Abū Madyan during his *riḥla* to the East. Abū Aḥmad returned to his village in the Guadalest valley (near Denia, in the east of al-Andalus) and founded a *zāwiya* where he became *shaykh al-murīdīn*. After his death his tomb became a center for pilgrimage (*ziyāra*). Around 650/1252, his family was forced to emigrate, fleeing the Christian advance. They settled in Granada where the founder of the *ṭarīqa* was said to have once come on visit and prayed. A *zāwiya* was founded¹¹⁹ financed with the money the family had managed to take with them, as well as money given to them by followers of the *ṭarīqa*. The leadership of the *ṭarīqa* seems to have been transmitted within the family. One of the leaders (d. 765/1364) succeeded the previous head of the *ṭarīqa*, who was a relative, and was elected to direct the prayers and deliver the *khuṭba*. He presided over the Sufi life of the *ṭarīqa* and managed its legal affairs under the supervision of the qadi of Granada. Information about the teachings and rituals of the *ṭarīqa* is limited. We know, however, that its members were considered to be Shādhilīs, that they recited poems of al-Ḥallāj, were endowed with a sense of ʿaṣabiyya and blindly obeyed their shaykh (*taqlīd*), to whom they were bound by an oath. They covered their faces with veils, hated the sound of the flute called *shabbāba*,¹²⁰ and performed *dhikr* with

¹¹⁷ In this connection see M.Kh. Masud, *Islamic Legal Philosophy. A Study of Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī's Life and Thought* (Islamabad 1977) 60-1.

¹¹⁸ See E. Lévi-Provençal, 'Le voyage d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa dans le royaume de Grenade', in *Mélanges W. Marçais* (Paris 1950) 217; J. Bosch Vilá, 'Nota de toponimia para la historia de Guadalest y su valle', *Miscelánea de Estudios Arabes y Hebraicos* xii-xiii (1963-4) 48, and especially M.I. Calero Secall, 'Los Banū Sīd Būna', *Sharq al-Andalus* iv (1987) 35-44.

¹¹⁹ See L. Massignon, 'Documents sur certains waqf-s des lieux saints de l'Islam', *Revue des Études Islamiques* xix (1951) 86.

¹²⁰ Ghālib b. Sīd Būna (653-733/1255-1332) wrote a tract on this question: *Taʿlīf fi taḥrīm samāʿ al-yarāʿa al-musammā bi'l-shabbāba*.

dances which induced ecstasy. The members of the *ṭarīqa* were mostly artisans, peddlers and weavers, but included vagrants and mendicants as well. Good relations existed between the *ṭarīqa* and the Naṣrid rulers,¹²¹ as evidenced by the fact that members of the *ṭarīqa* went to the Alhambra palace to perform some of their mystical practices at the invitation of the ruler who wished to benefit from the *baraka* of the rite.¹²²

The second *ṭarīqa* was that of al-Sāḥili (d. 735/1335),¹²³ who recommended prayer as a means of escaping from difficult situations and who experienced visions of Muḥammad. After al-Sāḥili's death, his pupils sought out his son who was living in the Maghreb and asked him to succeed his father as *shaykh al-murīdīn* and gave him an enormous amount of money. The son, Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Sāḥili al-Mu'ammam, honoured their request and returned to Málaga where he founded the first *madrasa* in al-Andalus¹²⁴ and established a *waqf* for its maintenance.¹²⁵

The surviving documentation on the pious endowments (*waqf/hubs*) of the *rawābiṭ* and the mosques in Granada¹²⁶ shows that the founders of the *ṭarīqas* benefited from the institution. *Waqf* was resorted to as one of the ways to preserve wealth within a family and keep property from being confiscated.¹²⁷

¹²¹ See Arié, *L'Espagne musulmane* 420-3.

¹²² See Rubiera, 'Un aspecto' 167, where he quotes Lévi-Provençal.

¹²³ See Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam* viii, 275; see also M. Charouiti Hasnaoui, 'Una familia de juristas en los siglos XIV y XV: los Banū 'Āṣim de Granada', *Estudios onomástico-biográficos de al-Andalus*, ed. M. Marín (Madrid 1994) vi, 180. On this *ṭarīqa* see I. Colero Secall and V. Martínez Enamorado, *Málaga, ciudad de al-Andalus* (Málaga 1995) 238-243.

¹²⁴ On the first *madrasas* to appear in the Maghreb, see M. Shatzmiller, 'Les premiers Mérinides et le milieu religieux de Fès: l'introduction des médresas', *Studia Islamica* xliii (1976) 109-118. The reason why the Merinids introduced *madrasas* was that they wished to create new cadres of scholars devoted to them and to reduce the teaching at the mosques which they could not control. In the case of al-Andalus the reason seems to have been just the opposite. See also J. Samsó, *Las ciencias de los antiguos en al-Andalus* (Madrid 1992) 394-9 for the motives behind the foundation of a *madrasa* by the Naṣrid king.

¹²⁵ See Rubiera, *op. cit.*, and Colero Secall/Martínez Enamorado, *Málaga* 247-250. Rubiera's information contradicts what G. Makdisi states in 'The madrasa in Spain: some remarks', *Revue de l'Orient Musulman et de la Méditerranée* xv-xvi (1973) 153-8 (Makdisi seems not to have been aware of Rubiera's article). Cf. Masud, *Islamic Legal Philosophy* 55 (in his view the establishment of *madrasas* led to a loss of control on the part of the '*ulamā*' and *fuqahā*' over intellectual movements, and their resistance to mysticism became more relaxed).

¹²⁶ See M.C. Villanueva Rico, *Habices de las mezquitas de la ciudad de Granada y sus alquerías* (Madrid 1961).

¹²⁷ See Rubiera, 'Un aspecto' 169. Cf. Makdisi's article (quoted in note 125) 155-6,

The Sufi *ṭarīqas* were associated with certain religious celebrations and practices, for example, the celebration of the *mawlid al-nabī*, both at court¹²⁸ and in their lodges (*rawābiṭ*).¹²⁹ The performance of *dhikr* and *samāʿ*^c sometimes led to ecstatic experiences. There is evidence that jurists attended gatherings where these rituals took place. At this period in al-Andalus, many of the urban élites venerated saints and Sufi shaykhs just as much as illiterate country people did.

Opposition to Sufi groups in the Naṣrid period revolved around three main issues: particular contested practices, the question of religious authority, and the economic implications of the *zāwīyas* and *ribāṭs* for the wider society.¹³⁰

Some Sufi practices were condemned by the *fuqahāʾ*³ as well as by the Sufis themselves, and a wide range of attitudes existed concerning these controversial subjects. Some condemned the celebration of the *mawlid*,¹³¹ others censored certain practices, such as singing and falling into a trance, introduced into a festival which in itself they considered to be a 'good innovation'. This latter censorship has come down to us in recorded fatwas.¹³² These fatwas show that the condemnation of such practices was closely connected with financial issues. In fact, legal advice is sought in cases when money, left as legacies and pious endowments, was used for Sufi celebrations and diverted from the lawful heirs or from use for the poor.¹³³ Other fatwas concern *dhikr*, *samāʿ*^c and recitation practiced by groups of

where he states that in al-Andalus scarce use was made of the *waqf* institution, because Mālikī law prohibits the founder from appointing himself as trustee of the *waqf*.

¹²⁸ See Kaptein, *Muḥammad's Birthday Festival* 132-3.

¹²⁹ See Arié, *L'Espagne musulmane* 422-3; C. Villanueva, 'Rabitas granadinas', *Miscelánea de Estudios Arabes y Hebraicos* iii (1954) 79-86.

¹³⁰ They have already been pointed out by Masud, *Islamic Legal Philosophy* 62-3.

¹³¹ This opposition may also have led to the end of such celebrations at the court. See Kaptein, *Muḥammad's Birthday Festival* 138, where it is pointed out that there is no evidence for the celebration of the *mawlid* after the beginning of the second reign of Muḥammad V, although the mystics probably continued the celebration (the moriscos celebrated the *mawlid*; Kaptein, *op. cit.* 139).

¹³² We have an abundance of fatwas related to Sufi matters from the eighth/fourteenth century. It is interesting to compare this situation with that of previous centuries. In the collections of fatwas of Ibn Sahl and al-Shaʿbi (fifth/eleventh century) there is no mention of Sufis, and the same can be said about the compilations by al-Qāḍī 'Iyād (although cf. H. al-Warāgli, 'Fatāwā gharṇāṭiyya fi'l-ḥawādith wa'l-bidaʿ', in *Yāqūt al-Andalus. Dirāsāt fi'l-turāth al-andalusī* [Beirut 1994] 174-5, for a report from Mālik b. Anas concerning a group of Sufis transmitted by 'Iyād). It is with Ibn Rushd (fifth-sixth/eleventh-twelfth century) that Sufi matters start to be discussed in fatwas collections.

¹³³ See Kaptein, *op. cit.* 135.

mystics and followers of Sufi shaykhs (*ṭawāʾif min al-fuqarāʾ wa-atbāʿ shuyūkh al-ṣūfiyya*) and which induced states of ecstasy. Sometimes it was argued that the presence of *fuqahāʾ* attending such gatherings legitimized ritual practices. Aspects of ritual practice were dealt with by the Sufi jurist Abūʾl-Barakāt al-Balafīqī (mentioned above), and the jurists Ibn Lubb (d. 782/1380) and al-Shāṭibī (d. 790/1388).¹³⁴ One of the fears current among the *fuqahāʾ* was that such practices might eventually come to replace the rituals prescribed by religious law. According to al-Shāṭibī, replacing the prescribed rituals this way would constitute infidelity (*kufr*) and deserved to be punished with the death penalty.¹³⁵ Al-Shāṭibī, like other authors of treatises against innovations (*bidʿa*),¹³⁶ was not against Sufism *per se*. They argued against certain innovations attributed to the influence of the *ahl al-kitāb*, and against practices lacking precedent and constituting a danger to, or contravening, the sharia. It was not always clear where to draw the line, as illustrated by the case of the *mawlid* celebrations, which in the end commanded almost universal acceptance notwithstanding acknowledgement of its *bidʿa* status.¹³⁷

The Sufism of the *ṭarīqas* demanded complete obedience to the shaykh, the one who possessed and conferred access to God. This submission could undermine the religious authority of the *fuqahāʾ*, whose access to the Divine will was not a personal one, but mediated by the revealed law. Between 774/1372 and 776/1374, Andalusī *ʿulamāʾ* discussed whether the *murīdūn* needed a spiritual master or

¹³⁴ See al-Wansharisī, *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib*, i-xiii (Rabat 1401/1981) xi, 35-46, and the studies by J. López Ortiz, 'Fatwas granadinas de los siglos XIV y XV', *Al-Andalus* vi (1941) 73-127; Nwyia, *Ibn ʿAbbād* xxxii, xxxiv; Masud, op. cit. 122-5; and al-Warāgli (some of them have used sources other than the *Miʿyār*). On the position of Abūʾl-Barakāt al-Balafīqī, see de la Puente, 'La familia' 338 (quoting S. Gibert).

¹³⁵ Al-Shāṭibī also dealt with the case of Sufis who made their own interpretation of the Koran, claiming that commands about worship were metaphoric, that direct knowledge of God was possible and that books did not provide true knowledge. In al-Shāṭibī's view those who held these beliefs were *kuffār* who should be sentenced to death: see Masud, op. cit., 120-1, where he quotes the *Miʿyār*.

¹³⁶ Such as Ibn al-Ḥājj, al-Turkumānī, Ibn al-Jawzī, Ibn Taymiyya; see M. Fierro, 'The treatises against innovations (*kutub al-bidaʿ*)', *Der Islam* lxix (1992) 204-46.

¹³⁷ Gramsci has proposed that rule by the 'elite' over lower ('subaltern') groups was maintained through the latter's acceptance of the former's culture, something which was facilitated by 'elite culture' itself 'assimilating' elements of 'popular culture' itself in order to be more persuasive: P. Biller, 'Heresy and literacy: earlier history of the theme', in P. Biller and A. Hudson (eds.) *Heresy and Literacy, 1000-1530* (Cambridge 1994) 1-18.

could learn from books.¹³⁸ This was clearly a discussion about the *loci* and nature of religious authority. The discussion was limited to scholarly debate and does not seem to have led to any intervention on the part of the ruler.

Denunciations of Sufi lodges as being a burden on society and as encouraging idleness emerge in the eighth/fourteenth century. Pious endowments were established on behalf of the lodges, which also received other kinds of donations. Besides the devotees of the *ṭarīqas*, travellers as well as the poor were also attracted to these establishments. In the case of the Banū Sīdī Būna *ṭarīqa*, the leader of the order was in charge of the religious and economic affairs of the *zāwiya*, even though he was under the supervision of the judge of Granada.¹³⁹ Recent archaeological research has shown how *ribāṭs* and other religious buildings punctuated the landscape throughout most parts of the Granadan kingdom,¹⁴⁰ especially in the countryside. The buildings are of different types, some situated on top of heights overlooking cultivated fields and villages. Those (individuals or communities) who used the religious buildings were not able to provide for their own sustenance. This means that their food must have come from the near-by villages. What is interesting is that the lands immediately surrounding *zāwiyas* and *ribāṭs* could have been cultivated, but were not. Thus, the economic relationship between the religious building and the village was premeditated, implying a specialization of functions.

Denunciations of the Sufi lodges claim that the institutions were encouraging idleness, since many of their occupants abandoned all worldly pursuits and lived from the resources accruing to their lodge. The at least partial economic dependence of lodges on villages in-

¹³⁸ See Nwyia, *Ibn ‘Abbād* xlviii-liv; M. Mahdi, ‘The Book and the Master as Poles of Cultural Change of Islam’, in S. Vryonis, Jr. (ed.), *Islam and Cultural Change in the Middle Ages* (Wiesbaden 1975) 3-15; Masud, op. cit. 107-8 (they are basically following the *Mi‘yār* xii 293-307). Ibn Khaldūn wrote a tract on this question: *Shifā’ al-sā’il li-tahdhīb al-masā’il*, ed. Muḥammad b. Tāwīt al-Ṭanjī (Istanbul 1958); ed. P. Ignace ‘Abdo Khalifé (Beirut 1959); *La Voie et la Loi ou le Maître et le Juriste*, transl. R. Pérez (Paris 1991). Pérez’s translation was reviewed by M. García-Arenal in *Al-Qanṭara* xiv (1993) 512-4.

¹³⁹ Cf. Masud, op. cit. 63 (‘Fuqahā’ were appointed for the supervision of the expenses of such donations, although the supervision and maintenance of such properties was left to the shaykh of the *zāwiya* and his associates’).

¹⁴⁰ See the study by J. Rodríguez López & L. Cara Barrionuevo, ‘El fenómeno místico-religioso rural en los últimos siglos del Islam andalusí: introducción al estudio arqueológico de las rábitas alpujarreñas’, in *Almería entre culturas (siglos XIII-XVI)*. Actas del Coloquio (Almería, 19-21 de abril 1990) (Almería 1990) 227-254.

creased the economic burden of the peasants which eventually caused the latter to complain.¹⁴¹ Complaints of this kind by the inhabitants of a village about a group of Sufis are most strikingly reflected in a fatwa by al-Ḥaffār (d. 811/1408), who states that they:

'...are more dangerous for Islam than the infidels... They have no virtue... None of them knows how to clean himself or to make ablution... In the name of religion they only know how to sing, to utter nonsensical statements and to encroach upon other's property unlawfully... What made this band of people adopt this way of life which is so dangerous for the religion? Was it that they needed things basic for the human being, food, drink, clothing and such things, and they did not know any trade or craft to live from? Or if they knew a trade, did they find it hard to toil to earn their livelihood? ... The devil seduced them and suggested to them this path which was full of fun and pleasure. They confuse the ignorant with the practice of *dhikr*... wearing patched clothes... as these were the signs of the virtuous people of this path... A certain scholar said that the people in a city must be like the parts of the body. As every part of the body has a particular use and none of them is futile... so are the inhabitants of a city. The soldiers guard the city, the *fuqahā'* and judges protect the law... and also teach it... Therefore one who is of no use in a city whereas he is capable of being so... must be expelled from the city. A philosopher (*hakīm*) taught his disciples to be like bees in a beehive... they do not let any idle member stay there. They would drive it out of the hive, because it would cramp their space, would use their honey and would spread idleness, and abandonment of trades... It is incumbent upon whoever can do so to restrain this people who are like a gangrenous sore in the side of religion. He must obstruct the way to this group for those who are inclined towards it. He must expel them from these places. (If he does so) he is a warrior of faith (*mujāhid*) in this respect'.¹⁴²

The economic reasons behind the opposition to certain groups of Sufis and their practices alluded to in al-Ḥaffār's fatwa do not need any comment. However, we have also seen that the urban *ṭarīqas* and certain Sufis active in the towns had a 'good' social function as distributors of alms and caterers for the material and spiritual needs of the urban poor. The *ṭarīqas* also supported commerce, crucial in the economy of Naṣrid Granada. In any case, what is clear is that by the eighth/fourteenth century, Sufism was influencing not only the religious, social and political spheres, but the economic sphere as well. Thus, Sufism came to pervade all levels of Andalusī society and substantially contributed to the complexity of its fabric. The Sufi practices on which the debate focused were not discontinued: in fact,

¹⁴¹ See Masud, op. cit., 63-4. See also Rodríguez Mañas, 'Encore sur la controverse entre soufis et juristes au Moyen Âge: critique des mécanismes de financement des confréries soufies', *Arabica* xliii (1996) 406-421.

¹⁴² Masud, op. cit., 64-5; see also Nwyia, *Ibn 'Abbād* xxxii-xxxiii; and a shortened version in *Mi'yār* xi, 42.

many of them are known to have continued among mudéjares and moriscos.

From the sixth/twelfth century onwards we have examples of Sufis acting as social mediators. At the end of the fourteenth century, however, we find members of the productive sectors of society resorting to the *fuqahā'* to solve their conflicts with unproductive Sufis. Thus, when Sufism became part of the economic structure of society, the *faqīh* was needed to guard against and regulate its abuses.

In spite of their conflicts, ulama and Sufis in al-Andalus were seen by Muslim society at large as legitimate ritual figures.¹⁴³ The Sufis increased their influence on society through different means: religious practices and beliefs; spiritual authority which led them to become communal leaders, solving personal and collective problems in the community; and economic power. Muslims resorted to Sufis against *fuqahā'* and to *fuqahā'* against Sufis, according to their particular needs.

The *fuqahā'* often resorted to scholarly means when they took issue with the Sufis: debate in the form of refutations or emulations, and exclusion of certain Sufi works from the curriculum of the *'ulamā'*. Occasionally recourse was taken to the burning of books which implied having the ruler's support. Such courses of action did not impede a gradual fusion of Sufis and *fuqahā'*.¹⁴⁴ Any presentation of Sufis and *fuqahā'* as incompatible, and as constituting a dichotomy in Muslim society is apparently erroneous as a generalization and based on a narrow view promoted by certain tendentious authors (both Sufis and *fuqahā'*). This purely oppositional view can easily be counteracted by means of numerous contemporary examples to the contrary. Where such presentations occur, they should be seen as grounded in polemic or determined by the fact that persons who combined the credentials of a Sufi and an *'ālim* were still rare in the period when the author in question was writing.

The *fuqahā'* rarely turned to the ruler for intervention against the

¹⁴³ See H. Touati, *Entre Dieu et les hommes. Lettrés, saints et sorciers au Maghreb (17e siècle)* (Paris 1994) 270, where he quotes P. Bourdieu, 'Genèse et structure du champ religieux', *Revue française de sociologie* xii (1971) 295-334, 320, to the effect that their basic conflict arose through competition over the 'pouvoir de modifier durablement les représentations et les pratiques des laïcs'.

¹⁴⁴ This aspect is dealt with by H. Munson, Jr., *Religion and Power in Morocco* (New Haven/London 1993), 83, 81, discussing E. Gellner, *Muslim Society* (New York 1981).

Sufis. When rulers did intervene, their action was prompted by fear of social and political upheaval and was most likely to happen at times when they were facing problems of legitimation. The existence of mystics claiming access to prophecy and establishing the boundaries of their community could not be tolerated by the Andalusī Umayyad caliphs, because it undermined their legitimacy, based on genealogy and on a set of doctrines embedded in Mālikism. By the time of the Almoravids, and contrary to received opinion, both Sufis and *fuqahā*² were accepted as channels to God. If at the end of their rule the Almoravids persecuted the most important Sufis of the time, that was because by then they felt they were under threat from the Almohads in their Moroccan power base, and because some Sufis, such as Ibn Qasī, were preparing a political take-over. Ibn Qasī's conviction that prophecy should be revitalized by sanctity and that the ruler should be a Sufi was opposed by most sectors of the population of the Andalusī towns. Those sectors were by then also against the Almoravids, but preferred to be ruled by their judges. Ibn Qasī's experiment (i.e. that the ruler's legitimacy should be based on his sanctity) was a bold one, as was the solution of the 'judges' that counteracted it. The judges' rebellion was not so much against the Almoravids as against the possibility of having a Sufi as political leader of the community with all the dangers that the charismatic leadership of the Sufi or the saint presented to the figure of the Prophet, whose charismatic leadership had become routinized in traditional norms interpreted by the *fuqahā*². This was the borderline that the *fuqahā*², for all their assimilation of Sufism, and most Sufis as well, avoided crossing.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ This paper was written during my stay (1994-5) at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, as a Herodotus Fellow.

FAQĪH VERSUS FAQĪR IN MARINID MOROCCO: EPISTEMOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF A POLEMIC

VINCENT J. CORNELL

One of the oldest stereotypes in Islamic Studies is that of the eternal conflict between scholar and Sufi, legist and mystic, doctor and saint, or sharia and *ḥaqīqa*. Like all stereotypes, this image persists because it contains at least a modicum of truth. There is no doubt that a significant difference exists between scriptural literalism at one extreme and the illuminationism of a Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191) or the Neoplatonism of an Ibn Sabʿīn (d. 669/1270) at the other. Furthermore, it is the legitimate task of the ulama, as guardians of normative Islam, to establish a clearly demarcated community of belief by maintaining common standards of doctrine and practice. Mystics, on the other hand, seek to “push the envelope” of these boundaries by appealing to a higher truth that transcends such limitations.

Yet despite these differences, one can always find instances of agreement between legists and Sufis. This was certainly the case in the Maghrib, where a juridically-minded “censor of the Sufis” (*muḥtasib al-ṣūfiyya*) such as the Shādhilī master Aḥmad Zarrūq (d. 899/1493) could assert:

‘There is no Sufism except through *fiqh*, because God’s exoteric laws (*aḥkām Allāh al-zāhira*) can only be known through it; and there is no *fiqh* but through Sufism, for praxis (*ʿamal*) is only carried out through truthfulness (*ṣidq*) and an orientation toward the divine (*tawajjuh*)’.¹

One can also find works of Mālikī dogma, such as the *Risāla* of Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī (d. 386/996), which contain such apparently “Sufistic” statements as:

‘God, may He be glorified, has created heaven as an eternal resting place for His *awliyāʾ*, whom He honors with the light of His noble countenance’.²

¹ Aḥmad Zarrūq, *Qawāʿid al-taṣawwuf*, ed. Muḥammad Zuhri al-Najjār and ʿAlī Muʿbid Firghali (Beirut 1992) 8.

² See Abū Muḥammad b. Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī, *Matn al-Risāla* (Rabat 1984) 12. Zarrūq, *Qawāʿid al-taṣawwuf* 8, also cites the following saying of Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795): ‘He who practices Sufism without *fiqh* is a heretic; he who practices *fiqh* without Sufism is

Does the appearance of the word *awliyāʾ* in Ibn Abī Zayd's *Risāla* necessarily mean that this Mālikī jurist from Fatimid Ifrīqiyā approved of either Sufism or the Sufi definition of sainthood? Not at all. In fact, it has long been known that Ibn Abī Zayd was so opposed to esoterism that he rejected even the possibility of post-Prophetic miracles (*karāmāt*).³ It is true that he accepted the juridical validity (*jawāz*) of the *awliyāʾ* *Allāh*, but only because the term was used in the Koran. His acknowledgement of the *walī* in principle did not imply that he thought of the *walī* as a Sufi saint.

When used in the Koran, the term *walī* signifies “manager,” “guardian,” “protector,” or “intercessor” — not “holy man”.⁴ The same ideas of management, guardianship, and protection also apply to the word *walāya*, which is used twice in the Holy Book and is often cited by modern scholars as the “correct” Islamic term for sainthood.⁵ When the Koran says: ‘Verily for the *awliyāʾ* of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve’ (10/62), there is no a priori reason for an exoterist like Ibn Abī Zayd to think of a Sufi saint. Rather, he was more likely to think of the *walī* as a person very much like himself — a scholar whose piety and knowledge has given him trusteeship over the Muslim community. As a judge or a mufti the *walī* manages the people’s affairs; by censoring or validating their behavior he guards their souls and protects them from error; by acting in his political capacity as one of “those who loosen and bind” (*ahl al-ḥall waʾl-ʿaql*), he functions as the people’s intercessor or representative.

It will be contended in this article that the issue of interpretive authority lies at the heart of the tension between the legist (*faqīh*) and the Sufi (*faqīr*) in Muslim society. As critical theory has demonstrated, the definitions given to contested terms and concepts are more dependent on the politics of discourse than on the rules of lexi-

unrighteous; but he who combines them both has attained certainty’ (*man taṣawwafa wa-lam yatafaqqah fa-qad tazandaqa, wa-man tafaqqaha wa-lam yataṣawwaf fa-qad tafassaqqa, wa-man jamaʿa baṣnahumā fa-qad taḥaqqaqqa*).

³ See Maribel Fierro, ‘The Polemic About the *Karāmāt al-Awliyāʾ* and the Development of Sufism in al-Andalus (Fourth/Tenth— Fifth/Eleventh Centuries)’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* lv (1992) 238. For a refutation of Ibn Abī Zayd’s rejection of miracles see Aḥmad b. Yahyā al-Wansharīsī (d. 914/1508), *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib waʾl-jāmiʿ al-mughrib ʿan fatāwī ahl Ifrīqiyā waʾl-Andalus waʾl-Maghrib*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥājji et. al. (Rabat 1981) xi, 248-252.

⁴ See, for example, Koran 9/107; 9/74, and 32/4. See also, Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (Cambridge, reprint 1984) ii, 3060.

⁵ Koran 8/72 and 18/44. See also, the discussion of this term in Michel Chodkiewicz, *Le Sceau des saints: Prophétie et sainteté dans la doctrine d’Ibn Arabī* (Paris 1986) 29-39.

cography. By denying the possibility of mutual accountability and relying instead on exclusivistic definitions of important terms, both exoterists and esoterists stake out artificial positions that in the end paradoxically depend on each other for validation.⁶ When the mystic's definition of what the *walī* is depends on what the jurist's definition of the *walī* is not (and vice-versa), the result becomes what Michel Foucault has termed a "discursive formation"—a rhetorical construct in which the living man of God is obscured by a forest of tropes.⁷ This new figure, who is constructed for his audience through the rhetoric of sacred biography and Sufi theoretical treatises, is more of an *œuvre*, or product of the discursive environment, than a real human being. Consequently, his career is "read" according to the epistemologies that inform each perspective—either the juridical or the mystical.⁸ Thus, if the modern historian of Islam wants to deconstruct the polemics about sainthood and Sufism in a particular context, he must first identify the "enunciative modalities" of the situation: Who is doing the speaking? What gives him the right to do so? Who bestows authority on the speaker? Where is the institutional locus from which he speaks? What is the epistemological field of discourse?⁹

In Morocco, the dispute over sainthood, Sufism, and the role of the spiritual master was largely a product of the Marinid era (669-869/1268-1465), a span of two centuries that is roughly contemporaneous with the Mamluk period of Egyptian history. Contemporary historians tend to view this era as a time of gilded decadence, in which the spirit of innovation that characterized early Almohadism was replaced by a traditionalism that was tailored to the needs of the Banū Marīn clan of Zanāta Berbers who ruled Morocco from their capital at Fez.¹⁰ In the fertile lowland regions that French colonists would later describe as *le Maroc utile*, a tribal mafia of Berber war-

⁶ This view of accountability is derived from Jürgen Habermas' model of communicative reason. See David Couzens Hoy and Thomas McCarthy, *Critical Theory* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass. 1994) 74-93. See also, Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston 1984); see also fn. 44.

⁷ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York 1972) 38. See also, Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore 1978).

⁸ Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* 15 note 2, 23-24.

⁹ Ibid. 50-55. See also, Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself As Another*, transl. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago 1992) 16-23.

¹⁰ See, for example, Abdallah Laroui, *The History of the Maghrib: An Interpretive Essay*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton 1977) 102.

rriors (the shaykhs of the Banū Marīn) regarded nearly everything of value — land, tax revenues, and political influence — as alienable and concessible. According to the Moroccan historian Mohamed Kably, this spoils system was maintained by an alliance of convenience among three mutually dependent interest groups: Zanāta tribal segments related by kinship to the Banū Marīn ruling family, collectivities of Arab and Berber “associates” whose loyalty was ensured through marriage or the prospect of legalized plunder, and what Kably calls the “sedative” participation of the ulama and the mercantile elites.¹¹ In his view, the corrosive effects of this system caused the sharia to lose its vitality while the rise of rural Sufism eroded much of the authority that urban religious institutions still commanded.¹²

The intellectual ethos of this period was formed in what another Moroccan historian, Muḥammad al-Manūnī, has termed the “First Marinid Age”— an era that spanned six decades from 667/1268 to 731/1330.¹³ To urban scholars this was a time of peril for both Islam as a whole and for the Maghrib in particular. In 656/1258 came word of the conquest of Baghdad by the Ilkhan Hülāgū and the execution of the °Abbasid caliph al-Musta°ṣim. Compounding this calamity were the depredations of Castilian and Aragonese armies in al-Andalus, which raided at will throughout Muslim Spain as the Al-mohad state unraveled. These attacks struck Morocco itself in 659/1260, when Castilian raiders sacked and burned the city of Salé, taking more than 3,000 women and children captive.¹⁴

As the raid on Salé demonstrated, the western Maghrib was particularly isolated, and its inhabitants lived in constant fear for the future. The *faqīh* Muḥammad al-°Abdarī al-Tilimsānī, who performed the *hajj* in 688/1289, reports in his *Riḥla* that the hinterlands of Tlemcen in western Algeria were so overrun by Arab pastoralists that pilgrims had to pay protection fees and journey with an armed

¹¹ Mohamed Kably, *Société, pouvoir, et religion au Maroc à la fin du Moyen-Age* (Paris 1986) 222.

¹² Ibid. 223. Kably’s views are based on the theories of Alfred Bel, *La Religion musulmane en Berbérie. Esquisse d’histoire et de sociologie religieuses* (Paris 1938). See also, Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period* (Cambridge 1987) 102; and Laroui, *The History of the Maghrib* 212-215.

¹³ Muḥammad al-Manūnī, ‘Madkhal ilā ta’rīkh al-fikr al-islāmī fi ‘l-°aṣr al-Marīnī al-awwal’, in idem, *Waraqāt ‘an al-ḥadāra al-maghribiyya fi ‘aṣr Banī Marīn* (Rabat 1979) 192-211.

¹⁴ Kably, *Société, pouvoir, et religion* 55-57.

escort if they wanted to reach the central Maghrib unharmed. Further to the east, the disruption of seaborne commerce by Christian corsairs and bedouin raids on overland caravans had reduced formerly prosperous trading centers, such as Bijāya, to mere shadows of what they had been only fifty years before.¹⁵

To make matters worse, Berber nativism and antinomianism were common in the mountains of the Far Maghrib. In the Imī-n-Tānūt region southwest of Marrakesh, the independent emirate of Saksyūwa provided a refuge for Abū Zayd Ibn ʿUmar al-Murtaḍā (d. 712/1313), the lone survivor of the Almohad ruling family.¹⁶ The most famous ruler of Saksyūwa, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Wāhid al-Saksyūwī (d. 762/1360-1), was suspected by the ulama of dabbling in philosophy, alchemy, and other types of esoterism. Most scandalous to his juridical opponents was the rumor that he held gatherings with Jewish rabbis, from whom he learned the arts of magic and divination.¹⁷

The Berber rulers, or *igelliden*, of Saksyūwa were not alone in contesting the authority of either Mālikism or the Marinid state. Near the Tizi-n-Test pass that linked the High Atlas mountains with the Sūs valley, the Maṣmūda tribes of Tīnmāl continued to honor the memory of the Almohad *mahdī* Ibn Tūmart (d. 522/1128). Calls for a mahdist revival continued in this region throughout the Marinid period. The doctrines of this post-Almohad messianism were disseminated by wandering preachers known as ʿAkākiza (staff-bearers), so named for the walking-stick (ʿukkāz) that they carried on their journeys. According to the Algerian legist Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Wansharisī (d. 914/1508), these Berber missionaries claimed that the Almohad doctrine of *tawḥīd* was incumbent on every Muslim, that eating the food of Mālikis or praying in their company was a major sin (*kabīra*), and that one need not bathe after performing sexual intercourse.¹⁸

Also worrisome to the Mālikī ulama were outbreaks of messianic Shiism in al-Andalus and Morocco.¹⁹ In 666/1267-8, an Andalusian

¹⁵ See ʿAbū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-ʿAbdarī, *Riḥlat al-ʿAbdarī*, ed. Muḥammad al-Fāsī (Rabat 1968) 9, 11, 26-27, 64.

¹⁶ al-Manūnī, 'Madkhal' 196-197.

¹⁷ Ibid. 196.

¹⁸ Muḥammad al-Manūnī, 'al-Tayyārāt al-fikriyya fi 'l-Maghrib al-Marīnī', in id., *Waraqāt* 246-247.

¹⁹ See M.A. Makki, 'al-Tashayyu' fi'l-Andalus', *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos* (1954) 93-149.

named Ibrāhīm al-Fāzārī proclaimed the millenium at Málaga. In time, al-Fāzārī rose in his pretensions from the rank of *walī Allāh* to that of *al-Muntaẓar* (The Expected One), and ended his life claiming to be a prophet with a new revelation.²⁰ By the time his revolt collapsed, large numbers of Mālikī ulama in southern Spain had been imprisoned, tortured, or killed by his followers. Two decades later, in 686/1287, a Berber called al-Ḥājj al-ʿAbbās b. Šāliḥ from the al-Šanhāja al-Šaghīr tribe in the Moroccan Rif arose and proclaimed himself the “Messenger of the Fāṭimī” (*Rasūl al-Fāṭimī*). His rebellion caused widespread destruction in northern Morocco and succeeded in capturing the port of Bādīs before being put down by Marinid troops.²¹

To counteract the intellectual decline that these movements augured, the ulama of the Marinid period relied on abridgments (*mukhtaṣarāt*) as a means of popularizing the study of grammar, theology, and *fiqh*.²² First brought to Morocco at the beginning of the fourteenth century by scholars from the Sūs, these works formed the basis of the curriculum in semi-independent city-states such as Sabta and Bādīs on the Mediterranean coast and in *ribāṭs* such as Tīt-n-Fitr and Asafi along the Atlantic littoral.²³ Although they were introduced in order to raise the level of knowledge in general, the practice of using *mukhtaṣarāt* was denounced by the noted Sufi poet and mathematician Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī (d. 721/1321), who feared that an over-reliance on abridged texts would lead to a lessening of intellectual standards.²⁴

Despite Ibn al-Bannāʾʾs objections, the use of abridgments soon spread to the major cities of the Far Maghrib. In large part, this was due to the fact that their rhymed and easily memorized texts facilitated the principal agenda of the Marinid ulama— the creation of a unified, or “orthodox” epistemology. Like other orthodoxies in the making, this officially sanctioned approach to knowledge was not defined on the basis of religious doctrine alone, but also consisted of

²⁰ See Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Qashtālī (d. early eighth/fourteenth cent.), *Tuḥfat al-muḡhtarib bi-bilād al-Maghrib li-man lahu min al-ikhwān fī karāmāt al-Shaykh Abī Marwān*, ed. Fernando de la Granja (Madrid 1974) 81–82.

²¹ See ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq b. Ismāʿīl al-Bādīsī (fl. 711/1311), *al-Maqṣad al-sharīf waʾl-manẓar al-laṭīf fī ʾl-ṭarīf bi-ṣūlahāʾ al-Rīf*, ed. Saʿīd Aḥmad Aʿrāb (Rabat 1982) 115.

²² al-Manūnī, ‘Madkhal’ 199.

²³ Ibid. 200–201.

²⁴ On Ibn al-Bannāʾ and his works, see Mohamed B.A. Bencheḡroun, *La Vie Intellectuelle Marocaine sous le Mérinides et les Waṭṭāsides* (Rabat 1974) 178–185.

a methodology or “science” that was delimited by the tenets of juridical reasoning. As such, it fit the definition of a science as proposed by Thomas Kuhn: ‘an implicit body of intertwined theoretical and methodological belief that permits selection, evaluation, and criticism’.²⁵

The key to the development of this epistemology was a standardized educational system that depended on a finite set of approved sources and procedures. In order to ensure that the Mālikī school of law would never again be challenged by a methodological rival, the study of the sources of jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) was made obligatory for all students who passed beyond the elementary level. By the first half of the eighth/fourteenth century, when the Marinid state was at the height of its power and influence, the Mālikī version of *uṣūl* had developed into a discipline that was long on authority and short on personal initiative. Acceptable sources of precedent were limited to the Koran, the Prophetic Sunna, the practice (*ʿamal*) of the Prophet’s Companions and the community of Medina, and the opinions (*ʿamal ijihādī*) of previous Mālikī jurists. Although it was still possible for an individual scholar to practice *ijihād*, the ability of this method to effect change was limited by its use of syllogistic reasoning and its emphasis on the normativeness of established tradition. As for the principle of binding consensus (*ijmāʿ*), this became an impediment to change rather than a safety-valve for the expression of minority points of view.

One cannot overestimate the influence of *uṣūl al-fiqh* on the formation of Marinid-era intellectuals. Whether they were poets, historians, geographers, judges, or government officials, all were trained in the same methods of reasoning. In time, the idea of an *uṣūl*-driven orthodoxy spread to other disciplines, so that one also studied a *fiqh* of grammar, a *fiqh* of logic, or a *fiqh* of Koranic interpretation. Some scholars even went so far as to apply jurisprudential reasoning to fields that were not normally related to the study of law. Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), for example, sought in his *Muqaddima* to create a science of *uṣūl al-taʾrīkh* that was based on the principles of *uṣūl al-fiqh*.²⁶ Although it was not possible, in this premodern period, to impose a seamless orthodoxy on the entire intellectual tradition of the Far Maghrib, the majority of scholars studied and memorized the

²⁵ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago 1970) 10, 16-17.

²⁶ See Bencheikroun, *La Vie Intellectuelle* 67. See also, Aziz al-Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldūn* (London and New York 1990) 153-155.

same works. In the field of jurisprudence these offerings included: the *Risāla* of Ibn Abī Zayd, the *Mukhtaṣar* of Ibn al-Ḥāḥib, the *Mukhtaṣar* of Khalīl b. Ishāq, the *Tahdhīb* of al-Barādhī^c, and the *Mudawwana* of Saḥnūn.²⁷ Other disciplines, such as grammar and *tafsīr al-qurʾān*, also had their own body of standard or abridged texts.

Throughout the Marinid period, the ulama of the capital city of Fez saw themselves as the arbiters of epistemology, or “those who know what one is supposed to know.”²⁸ That issues of authority were paramount in the minds of these scholars is proven by their concern for “proper” sources of precedent and the privileged position of the ulama as an intellectual class. These attitudes are expressed in a variety of manuscripts, from collections of fatwas to the memoirs of court officials and the biographies of Sufi saints. This article, however, will focus primarily on two works that appeared at the end of their respective centuries: Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Wansharīsī’s ninth/fifteenth-century compendium of juridical opinions entitled, *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib waʾl-jāmiʿ al-mughrib ʿan fatāwī ahl Ifrīqiyyā waʾl-Andalus waʾl-Maghrib* and Ibn Khaldūn’s eighth/fourteenth-century fatwa on Sufism, *Shifāʾ al-sāʾil li-tahdhīb al-masāʾil*.²⁹

The first round in the conflict between the Marinid ulama and the Sufis involved a reprise of earlier, Almoravid-era arguments against Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) and his magnum opus, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*. The point of this debate seems not to have been about al-Ghazālī’s views on Sufism, but rather about his critical attitude toward *taqlīd*, or loyalty to a single school of law.³⁰ The text of al-Wansharīsī’s *al-Miʿyār* contains a fatwa by al-Ghazālī for his student Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 543/1149), who had questioned the permissibility of using *uṣūl* methodology in a Mālikī context. In this fatwa al-Ghazālī (a Shāfiʿite by both training and preference) pays lip-service to the equality of the four Sunni schools of law, but in fact dismisses the collective traditions of the early Muslim community as untrustworthy.³¹ This opinion undermines the authority of the

²⁷ Benchebkroun, *La Vie Intellectuelle* 65.

²⁸ Thanks are due to Professor Jonathan Lipman of Mount Holyoke College for this phrase.

²⁹ For al-Wansharīsī’s *al-Miʿyār*, see op. cit.. For Ibn Khaldūn’s *Shifāʾ al-sāʾil*, see idem, *La Voie et la Loi, ou le Maître et le Juriste*, trans. René Pérez (Paris 1991).

³⁰ For Andalusian critiques of al-Ghazālī’s views on Sufism, see Maribel Fierro, ‘Opposition to Sufism in al-Andalus’, p. 186 in this volume.

³¹ al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār* xi, 163-165.

Mālikī *madhhab*, which looks to the practice (‘*amal*’) of first/seventh-century Medina as its primary source of precedent.

Despite the subversive implications of al-Ghazālī’s legal doctrines, few ulama in the Marinid period dared to challenge this paragon of Islamic scholarship and master of *uṣūl* methodology. As if to underline this point, in his memoir of court life under Sultan Abū’l-Ḥasan al-Marīnī (r. 731-49/1331-48), the governmental secretary and Suhrawardī Sufi Muḥammad b. Marzūq al-Tilimsānī (d. 781/1379) recounts a nightmare sent by God to punish the Naṣrid ruler of Granada for allowing himself to be turned against al-Ghazālī by his advisers.³²

A second and more successful type of anti-Sufi polemic was directed against the phenomenon of institutionalized Sufism. This critique was influenced by the teachings of the Ḥanbalite jurist and theologian Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328). Two of Ibn Taymiyya’s students, the brothers ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and Abū Mūsā ‘Isā al-Burashkī, were present at the court of Abū’l-Ḥasan al-Marīnī.³³ From the very beginning, the prime target of this polemic was rural, or *ribāṭ*-based Sufism, which proliferated widely during the unrest that accompanied the disintegration of the Almohad state. Somewhat surprisingly, one of the earliest opponents of the rural *fuqarā’* was a Sufi himself: the juridically-minded Abū Muḥammad al-Fishtālī (d. 660/1261) who denounced them as ‘hypocrites who use religion to extort the goods of simple and credulous people in order to satisfy their thinly-disguised cupidity’.³⁴ A similar attitude is expressed by Ibn Marzūq, who grumbles about the ‘ignorant *ṣulahā’* of the countryside’ and their ‘failure to follow the ways of the folk of knowledge and discipline (‘*adam sulūk masālik ahl al-‘ilm wa’l-riyāḍa*’).³⁵

These criticisms, however, should not cause one to assume that all forms of rural Sufism were unacceptable. On the contrary, from the very beginning of their reign, the Marinids sought to legitimize their tribally-based regime by promoting popular as well as elite forms of piety. Umm al-Yumn, the mother of Abū Yūsuf al-Marīnī (r. 656-85/1258-86), is portrayed by official historians as a saint and was the

³² Muḥammad b. Marzūq al-Tilimsānī, *al-Musnad al-ṣaḥīḥ al-ḥasan fī ma’āthir wa-maḥāsin Mawlānā Abī’l-Ḥasan*, ed. Maria-Jesus Viguera (Algiers 1981) 307-309.

³³ Ibid. 265-266.

³⁴ Benchekroun, *La Vie Intellectuelle* 488.

³⁵ Ibn Marzūq, *al-Musnad* 162.

disciple of a Rifian Sufi named Abū °Uthmān al-Waryaghli.³⁶ According to the hagiographer °Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Bādisī (fl. 711/1311), the Sufis of Baqqūya in the Rif mountains would gather three times a year at the hermitage endowed by this pious woman (*ṣāliḥa*), who was the daughter of a tribal leader from the same region.³⁷

Within Fez itself, a considerable number of Sufis could be found among the ulama, and included some very prominent figures. One was the noted *muḥaddith* Muḥammad b. Rushayd al-Sabtī (d. 721/1321), who served as the imam of major mosques in both Morocco and al-Andalus.³⁸ In addition, Muḥammad b. °Alī b. °Abd al-Razzāq al-Jazūlī (d. 749/1348) the grandson of one of the principle disciples of the Andalusian shaykh Abū Madyan (d. 594/1198), served as a qadi, an instructor in °ilm al-uṣūl, and a preacher for no less than three Marinid rulers.³⁹ Another Sufi was the Andalusian courtier and biographer Lisān al-Dīn Ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1375), whose mystical treatise, *Rawḍat al-ta°rif bi°l-hubb al-sharīf*, provided the pretext for his execution.⁴⁰ Finally, at the very end of the Marinid period, one finds in the *Fihris* of Muḥammad b. Ghāzī al-Miknāsī (fl. 896/1491) that this conservative and highly respected legist and historian saw no contradiction in following a Khadīrian Sufi tradition.⁴¹

This last example, which involves the iconoclastic jumping of links in a Sufi *silsila*, or chain of doctrinal transmission, brings up the related issues of authority and the nature of legitimate tradition. These two issues, far more than doctrinal concerns, were at the crux of the debate between the legist and the Sufi in Marinid Morocco. Indeed, the nearly total absence of doctrinal disputes in juridical sources from this region is in marked contrast to the situation in

³⁶ See Abū°l-Ḥasan °Alī b. Abī Zar° al-Fāsī (fl. 726/1326), *al-Anīs al-muṭrib bi-rawḍ al-qirtās fī akhbār mulūk al-Maghrib wa-ta°riḫ madīnat Fās* (Rabat 1973) 297.

³⁷ al-Bādisī, *al-Maqṣad* 92.

³⁸ On Ibn Rushayd and his works, see Bencheikroun, *La Vie Intellectuelle* 186-194.

³⁹ Ibn Marzūq, *al-Musnad* 262-265 and 410-411.

⁴⁰ See Pérez, Introduction to Ibn Khaldūn, *La Voie et la Loi* 75-77. See also, Bencheikroun, *La Vie Intellectuelle* 265-276. For the text of this work, see Lisān al-Dīn Ibn al-Khaṭīb al-Gharnāṭī, *Rawḍat al-ta°rif bi°l-hubb al-sharīf*, ed. Muḥammad al-Kattānī (Beirut 1970).

⁴¹ Abū °Abdallāh Muḥammad b. Ghāzī al-Miknāsī, *Fihris Ibn Ghāzī: al-Ta°allul bi-rusūm al-isnād ba°d intiqāl ahl al-manzil wa°l-nād*, ed. Muḥammad al-Zāhī (Casablanca 1979) 91. In premodern Morocco, a Khadīrian *ṭarīqa* was analogous to the Uwaysī traditions of the Mashriq and meant that the training of one's spiritual master was not wholly dependent on an established spiritual genealogy.

Mamluk Egypt, where such critiques were commonplace.⁴² The majority of anti-Sufi fatwas in al-Wansharī's *al-Mi'yar* deal with issues of praxis, such as dancing, singing, and the involvement of women in Sufi rituals. The most detailed opinions, however, are concerned with what might be called the "intellectual chain of command". An unusually overt expression of this problem can be found in an opinion by the Fāsī legist 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Qayrawānī (d. 750/1349-50), who ostensibly critiques ecstatic dancing (*raqṣ*) and sessions of rhythmic chanting or singing (*samā'*). As the following excerpt demonstrates, however, the real issue is not these practices per se, but the fact that the Sufis see themselves as alternatives to the ulama as sources of authority:

'This illiterate (*ummiyya*), ignorant (*jāhila*), and stupid (*ghabiyya*) faction (*rā'ifa*) has appeared, who enjoy gathering ignorant people around them and targeting the commoners (*al-'awāmm*), who are receptive to them but deficient in intellect. The Sufis enter among them by means of religion, making themselves their advisers, (and claiming) that their way is the way of the lovers of God. They urge them to practice repentance, altruism, love, true brotherhood, the denial of affluence and lust, and the heart's complete devotion to God with purpose, desire, and intent.

These attributes are praiseworthy and exemplary in religion, but when they are found among the sects of the Sufis (*al-qawm*) they are a deadly poison and a great calamity. This faction is the most harmful of all to the Muslims because they are rebellious satans. They are also the most difficult of factions to cure, for they are the furthest from understanding the ways of reasoned proof. This is because the basis (*aṣl*) of their sect is hatred for the ulama and flight from them. They imagine that [the ulama] are highway-robbers, who are veiled by their knowledge from the station of attainment. One who is in this state has lost the ability to engage in discourse (*saqāṭat mukālamatuhu*) and is beyond any cure. There is no use in saying anything to him, for speaking with him is as futile as striking cold iron. But one who does not involve himself with them (*man lam yanḡhamis fī khābiyatihim*) and does not fall into their abyss, may perhaps be safe from their enmity and protected from their error.

Know that this innovation (of Sufism), which consists of corrupting the beliefs (*'aqā'id*) of the commoners, is quicker than the coursing of poison through the body and is more harmful to religion than sexual promiscuity (*zinā*), theft, or any of the other transgressions or sins. For the evil of these latter sins are well-known, both to the one who commits them and to the one who avoids them. The sinner cannot fool anyone and can only hope for repentance and restraint. But the perpetrator of this (Sufi) *bid'a* imagines that (his behavior) constitutes the most perfect type of obedience and the most exalted form of worship. There-

⁴² See, for example, Th. Emile Homerin, 'Sufis and Their Detractors in Mamluk Egypt', p. 225 ff.. in this volume.

fore, the door of repentance is closed to him and he is cast forth from it, wandering aimlessly. For how can one hope for repentance from one who believes that (his error) is obedience and worship?⁴³

Al-Qayrawānī's contention that the Sufis and the ulama have lost the ability even to speak with each other reveals the epistemological dimension of the debate between the *faqīh* and the *faqīr* in Marinid society. It also brings to mind Jürgen Habermas' theory of communicative action. This pragmatic model of rationality focuses on how speaking and acting subjects acquire and use the shared forms of knowledge that lie behind consensus.⁴⁴ It is clear from the above passage that al-Qayrawānī and the Sufis he criticizes are not participants in the same communicative situation. Since each has completely different definitions of obedience to God, worship, and piety, there appears to be no common ground from which one can rationally judge the beliefs of the other. Indeed, far from sharing a basis for consensus, their "lifeworlds" are so separate as to pose a threat to each other's existence. For al-Qayrawānī, the only recourse is to avoid the Sufis like the plague, lest their doctrines infect the Muslim community with a disease that cannot be cured.

If one switches from a Habermasian to a Foucauldian perspective, one notices that what started as a problem of communication has now become a contest for power. Al-Qayrawānī is a jurist from Fez, the seat of the Marinid sultanate and the educational center for all of the western Maghrib. As a member of the ulama, he is one of the "people who count" (*al-a'yān*) and belongs to a family of scholars whose ties of kinship and patronage link him to the other elites who speak for the capital city as a whole. His status as a man of means is revealed by his patronizing attitude toward the lower classes (who are dismissed as creatures of little intellect) and his desire to present himself as far from outside influences. In a later passage from this fatwa he declares:

'I do not mean by the ulama those in our age who busy themselves with the disciplines of debate and disputation. Nor (do I mean) those who rely on the study of juridical decisions (*masā'il al-aqdiya*) and the rules of testimony (*shahādāt*) only to amass wealth, to become intimate with rulers and authority-figures, or to attain leadership over the commoners'.⁴⁵

Beyond any question of doctrine or practice, al-Qayrawānī's main

⁴³ al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi'yar* xi, 30-31.

⁴⁴ See H.-J. Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action* 10-22 (on lifeworlds), 286-287 and 307-308 (on agreement).

⁴⁵ al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi'yar* xi, 32.

problem with the Sufis is that they are unqualified to act as his peers, yet covet the prerogatives of “one who knows” (‘*ālim*, pl. ‘*ulamāʾ*). These presumptuous mystics are not the products of a state-sponsored education, nor did they attend the study circles of the scholars at the Qarawiyyīn mosque. Although they are acquainted with few, if any, of the sources that form the basis of a *faqīh*’s training, they nonetheless call into question the legitimacy of the intelligentsia who have guided the Marinid state through decades of dynastic strife and intertribal conflict. ‘If you see anyone avoiding the ulama’, al-Qayrawānī cautions, ‘avoid him, for no one avoids (the ulama) but the misguided innovator, who is neither guided by the Law nor a follower (of tradition). The ways of the Law can only be learned from the ulama, who are the heirs to the prophets (*warathat al-anbiyāʾ*)’. Indeed, how could it be otherwise, since God has made His testimony and the testimony of His angels like the testimony of the foremost in knowledge?’⁴⁶

For al-Qayrawānī, it is the *faqīh*, and not the *faqīr*, who is the true saint, or *walī Allāh*. After all, he maintains, of what real value are the evidentiary miracles of the Sufi saint compared with the knowledge, rectitude, and wisdom of the pious legist?

‘Let not any of you be deceived by the imaginings and fantasies of the innovators and the misguided and believe that they are miracles. On the contrary, they are (signs of) heresy and snares set by Satan to entrap those who believe in innovation and commit the sin of cupidity. In truth, the real miracle that God bestows on the person who displays rectitude (*istiḳāma*) is rectitude (itself) in following the Book and the Sunna and the practice of the forebears of this community (‘*amal salaf ḥādhihi al-umma*)’.⁴⁷

Likewise, it is the jurists, and not the Sufi shaykhs, who should be seen as the true heirs to the prophets and the imams of guidance (*aʾimmat al-hudā*):

‘(The believer) is obliged to take them as examples and to pattern his conduct after them, to follow in their footsteps, and to memorize their traditions . . . they are the real red sulphur (*al-kibrūt al-aḥmar*).’⁴⁸ Thus, if one falls short and is unable to reach their station but still

⁴⁶ Ibid. This last sentence refers to Koran 3/18: ‘God bears witness that there is no God but He, and that the angels and the foremost in knowledge are the upholders of justice’ (*shahida Allāhu annahu lā ilāha illā huwa waʾl-malāʾikatu wa-ulāʾl-ʿilmi qāʾiman biʾl-qisṭ*). Al-Qayrawānī’s inclusion of the testimony of the angels and the foremost in knowledge in his exegesis of the verb *shahida* (to testify, bear witness) goes beyond the literal meaning of the *āya*.

⁴⁷ al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār* xi, 32.

⁴⁸ The use of this term is a veiled reference to the Sufi practice of alchemy and may also be a back-handed reference to the doctrines of Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240). See,

knows the truth, he should not deceive himself or be misled. This is true counsel for those honest brothers and Sufis (*al-ikhwān aṣ-ṣādiqīn wa'l-murīdīn*) who are able to comprehend it'.⁴⁹

When faced with such an uncompromising assertion of juridical authority, it is easy to forget that there were other exoteric legists in Fez who disagreed with al-Qayrawānī and were more accommodating to the ways of the Sufis. However, even these liberal *fuqahā'* shared similar assumptions about the centrality of legal methodology as a way to knowledge. This can be seen in a fatwa on the necessity of following a spiritual master by Aḥmad al-Judhāmī al-Fāsī (d. 778/1376), who was more widely known as "al-Qabbāb" (the bucket-maker).⁵⁰ This scholar attempts to stake out an intermediate position between the *faqīh* and the *faqīr* by describing them as specialists who work from different, yet complementary epistemes.⁵¹ Despite its open-mindedness, however, this middle-of-the-road fatwa contains a subtext that differs markedly from its surface discourse. At first, al-Qabbāb feigns ignorance of the Sufi way of knowledge, saying:

'I have no expertise in (lit., "my mind and hands are empty of") this *ʿilm*. I have no knowledge of the terminology (*muṣṭalaḥāt*) of the Sufis, I have not specialized in any of their disciplines, I have not devoted myself to their ways (*turuq*), I have not followed their shaykhs, I have not sat with their pundits (*aʿlāmahum*), and I have not experienced the attainment of their goals'.⁵²

This protestation of ignorance should not be taken at face value. Although he is not a member of a Sufi *ṭāʾifa*, al-Qabbāb is fully aware of Sufi doctrines and has met at least one of their most important shaykhs. We know this because he admits that he is acquainted with the teachings of the juridically-oriented mystic Abū Muḥammad al-Fishtālī (see above) and has actually visited the reclusive patron saint of Salé, Aḥmad b. ʿĀshir al-Anṣārī (d. 764/1362).⁵³ What is more, his knowledge of these two Sufis is sufficient for him to attempt a formal definition of Sufism as an intel-

for example, Claude Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life of Ibn ʿArabī* (Cambridge 1993).

⁴⁹ al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār* xi, 32-33. *Al-ikhwān* (the brothers), *al-ṣādiqūn* (the truthful) and *al-murīdūn* (the aspirants) are terms that Sufis use to describe themselves.

⁵⁰ For information on al-Qabbāb, see Aḥmad Bābā al-Timbuktī (d. 1036/1627), *Nayl al-ibtihāj bi-taḥrīr al-dibāj* (Fez 1377/1899) 52-53.

⁵¹ For the text of this fatwa, see al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār* xi, 117-123; see also, Pérez, Introduction to Ibn Khaldūn, *La Voie et la Loi* 48-52.

⁵² al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār* xi, 117.

⁵³ Ibid. 120-121.

lectual discipline. This he sums up as comprising two “arts” (*fann*): (1) the knowledge of spiritual states and the means to their attainment (i.e., mysticism); and (2) the maintenance of virtuous acts, their purification from vice, and knowledge of the sins of the lower soul (i.e., piety and ethics).⁵⁴

Although al-Qabbāb clearly prefers pietistic and ethical Sufism over mysticism, he is hesitant to condemn mysticism outright. Rather, he asserts that Sufism, like medicine or *fiqh*, is a discipline that includes both theoretical and practical forms of knowledge. As a form of theoretical knowledge, mysticism is too complex to be learned from books alone. Thus, the aspiring mystic must have a qualified teacher (i.e., a Sufi shaykh) for guidance. As an example of such a teacher he cites the late-Almohad-era Sufi al-Fishtālī, whose fame in the art of miracle-working (*fann al-karāmāt*) was based on a juridically validated reputation for rectitude. Those who sought al-Fishtālī’s guidance, we are told, were first ordered to study with a *faqīh* named Abū Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ⁵⁵ This is because the only legitimate entry into Sufism is through the “gate of repentance”:

‘As for the rules of Sufism’s proper practice ... these are to be found in the books of *fiqh* ... for what lies behind repentance is an infinity (*ghāya*) that cannot be attained. Sufism is a fearful, difficult, and unsafe path and few are those who partake of it and are guided to it. Therefore, it is best and safest for the repenter to limit himself to the knowledge of the exoteric legists (*fuqahā’ al-zāhir*). In fact, it is not even permissible today to join a shaykh as one’s first step in following the Sufi way’.⁵⁶

With these words, al-Qabbāb shows his true colors, and joins his less liberal colleagues in asserting the superiority of the juridical path of knowledge over that of mysticism. It is for similar reasons as well that he recommends the *Risāla* of al-Qushayrī (d. 467/1074) and the *Iḥyā’* of al-Ghazālī as introductions to Sufi doctrine. Al-Qushayrī poses little threat to the ulama because he is universally recognized as a “Sunni Sufi” (*sic.*) and upholds the authority of orthodox tradition. As for al-Ghazālī, he possesses unimpeachable credentials as a paragon of proper *‘ilm*. This is proven by his unsurpassed knowledge of orthodox theology as well as a practical expertise in applied jurisprudence (*al-masā’il al-fiqhiyya*) that both precedes and informs his

⁵⁴ Ibid. 119.

⁵⁵ It is unclear whether this individual is Abū Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ b. Yanṣāren al-Māgiri (d. 631/1234), the greatest Moroccan successor to Abū Madyan and the founder of Ribāṭ Asafī. If this were the case, he would be a juridically-oriented Sufi, not a *faqīh*.

⁵⁶ al-Wansharisī, *al-Mi‘yār* xi, 121.

mystical doctrines.⁵⁷

The Tunisian jurist, historian and social theorist ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn Khaldūn follows a similar line of reasoning in his fatwa on Sufism, *Shifāʾ al-sāʾil*. Starting from the discussion of fields of knowledge that comprises the first book (*Kitāb al-ʿilm*) of al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, he divides Sufism into two epistemological categories: (1) the science of praxis (*ʿilm al-muʿāmalāt*), in which Sufism is linked to the sharia, and (2) the science of “unveiling” or mysticism (*ʿilm al-mukāshafāt*), in which Sufism goes beyond the sharia. These epistemes, in turn, form the basis of two separate, but complementary disciplines, which Ibn Khaldūn characterises as types of *fiqh*: (1) outward *fiqh* (*fiqh al-zāhir*), which consists of the laws relative to the actions of the body; and (2) inward *fiqh* (*fiqh al-bāṭin*), which concerns the laws relative to the inner workings of the conscience and the salvation of the soul.⁵⁸ It is this latter *fiqh*, Ibn Khaldūn claims, that constitutes the true domain of Sufism.

Ibn Khaldūn is unique among Marinid-era jurists in that he deals explicitly with Sufi doctrine. Despite this departure from the norm, however, his perspective on Sufism is little different from that of al-Qabbāb and includes a similarly exoteric approach to esoterism. For example, he sees no contradiction in eventually negating the epistemological dimension of *fiqh al-bāṭin* (what we would call Sufi metaphysics), and redefining it in purely exoteric and behaviorally-oriented terms as *fiqh al-waraʿ*, or the *fiqh* of pious scrupulousness.⁵⁹ Equally significant is his repudiation of Sufi mysticism (*ʿilm al-mukāshafāt*). Completely rejecting this *ʿilm* as a legitimate form of knowledge, he dismisses such well-established doctrines as Ibn al-ʿArabī's theory of the Divine Names as “bizarre” derivations of the teachings of the philosophers.⁶⁰

For Ibn Khaldūn, the mystical dimension of Islam — which Sufis and Western Islamicists alike tend to think of as the very essence of *taṣawwuf* — is nothing but an innovation of an innovation, a *bidʿa* compounding a *bidʿa*. This brusque dismissal of mysticism is expressed even more strongly in another (and much shorter) fatwa in which he calls for the consignment of Ibn al-ʿArabī's works to the

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibn Khaldūn, *Shifāʾ al-sāʾil*, in Pérez, *La Voie et la Loi* 112.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 180.

flames. But if mysticism is not legitimate Sufism, what is? The answer, Ibn Khaldūn believes, can be found in the ‘way of the Sunna and the Righteous Forebears (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*), which conforms to the example of the Holy Book, the Sunna, the Righteous Forebears, the Companions of the Prophet, and their Followers’.⁶¹

By the end of his fatwa, Ibn Khaldūn strips away the epistemological or “scientific” dimension of Sufism entirely and reduces it to mere asceticism. Thus denuded of its doctrinal content, *taṣawwuf* comprises spiritual combat, heroic piety, and little else — a model that poses no threat to the juridically-defined epistemology of the ulama. In this highly circumscribed system, the Sufi shaykh has only two legitimate roles left to play: he can either teach an orthodox science like the shaykhs of the Qarawiyyīn and the other educational centers of the Maghrib (*al-shaykh al-mu‘allim*), or he can act as a moral and spiritual adviser who helps others attain happiness and salvation (*al-murabbī al-nāṣiḥ*).⁶² In these roles, the function of the Sufi shaykh is similar to that of a jurisconsult (*shaykh al-fatwā*), in that he imparts his knowledge to his own students and guides the masses in the ways of proper conduct. Thus, for Ibn Khaldūn both the juridically-legitimated Sufi and the *faqīh* specialize in praxis, the only difference being that the Sufi deals with the inward rather than the outward aspect of *fiqh al-mu‘āmalāt*. In other words, the Sufi is a *faqīh* of the heart rather than of the body.

A similar analogy also applies to sainthood. According to Ibn Khaldūn, the difference between the *walī Allāh* and any other pious specialist in *fiqh* is one of degree rather than of kind. This is not to say that sainthood is unreal. True saints do, in fact, exist; they are pious men and women who have retired from the world and have purged all earthly attachments from their hearts. However, like any other Muslim exemplar, the essence of their sanctity does not lie in their mystical doctrines, but in their internalization of the teachings of the Koran and the legal rulings (*mashrū‘iyyāt*) that are derived from it.⁶³

The opinions of al-Qabbāb and Ibn Khaldūn represent — from a jurist’s point of view— what has variously been called “sharia-minded”, “Sunni,” or “juridical” Sufism.⁶⁴ Although the legists of the

⁶¹ Ibid. 251-253.

⁶² Ibid. 197.

⁶³ Ibid. 211.

⁶⁴ For a detailed discussion of these concepts, see my monograph, *Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism* (Austin 1998).

Marinid era had different thresholds of tolerance in regard to matters of doctrine and practice, they all shared an abiding interest in maintaining an epistemology that was defined by themselves alone — the exclusive fraternity of ulama. In the significant minority of cases where a *faqīh* was also a Sufi *faqīr*, his *taṣawwuf* continued to be expressed in juridically-oriented rather than mystical terms. Like his exoteric colleagues, the juridical Sufi upheld the authority of a *fiqh*-based epistemology that was predicated on a highly circumscribed list of acceptable sources: the Koran, the Sunna, the *ʿamal* of the Prophet's Companions and their Followers, an *ijtihād* that was based on a commonly-held conception of logic, and a theory of consensus that was defined and mediated by the ulama themselves.

At times, when the influence of those Sufis who advocated a different epistemology became too great, the Marinid ulama would call upon the power of the state to enforce their will and secure their role as the arbiters of both knowledge (*ʿilm*) and practice (*ʿamal*). In urban areas, where centralization was the norm, their writ was seldom challenged. In the rural peripheries, however, and especially in the mountains, it was all the ulama could do to maintain respect for their views in the face of a popular mysticism that challenged not only their sociopolitical influence, but also their very reason for being. It is highly ironic that the stable, rational, and well-ordered universe of the Moroccan *faqīh* would be undone in modern times, not by the dreaded Sufi, but by royal absolutism, the twentieth-century nation-state, a simplistic form of Salafī exoterism that reduces theology and dogma to the lowest common denominator, and an information technology that disseminates alternative and even alien modes of knowledge to the masses. Under such conditions, the epistemological perspective of the premodern jurist was no longer relevant, and thus could not survive.

SUFIS AND THEIR DETRACTORS IN MAMLUK EGYPT A SURVEY OF PROTAGONISTS AND INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS

TH. EMIL HOMERIN

A sense of confidence is conveyed by the Islamic architecture of Cairo.¹ Though on occasion subject to earthquake and fire, medieval Cairo escaped the brutal destructions incurred by most major urban centers of the Islamic heartlands. We can still trace the pattern of Fustāt's water works, of al-Ḥākim's imposing mosque, and we may enter Saladin's Citadel, which now guards the small serene sanctuary of Sulaymān Pasha together with Muḥammad ʿAlī's grandiose mosque pretentious to Ottoman power.

Security and authority are the impressions initially left by the magnificent domed structures of the Mamluk period, from the stately mosques of Qalāʾūn, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, and Sulṭān Ḥasan, to the vast desert complexes left by Barqūq, Bars Bāy, and Qāʾit Bāy. Yet, drawing nearer one sees that Saladin's walls bear marks of the Crusades; al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's mosque reveals the Mongol presence, while Sultan Ḥasan's sumptuous mosque and *madrassa* embody a financial legacy left by the Black Death.²

Threats of invasion, of famine and infestation — whether real or imagined — were conspicuous features of Mamluk society. Frequently, they were all too real, and the Mongols and the bubonic plague, in particular, were by far the most devastating. Due to their strength, severity, and continued recurrence, both were experienced by Muslims as painful trials sent by God to test his community. These were realities shared by everyone, from the masses praying

¹ I wish to thank Ruth Zoe Ost, Daniel Beaumont, and William Scott Green for reading earlier drafts of this paper and for offering their valuable suggestions.

² See Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *The Islamic Architecture of Cairo* (Leiden 1989) and Richard Parker, R. Sabin, and C. Williams, *Islamic Monuments of Cairo: A Practical Guide* (Cairo 1985). For a description of Saladin's construction of the walls, which were largely built by Crusader prisoners, and the larger citadel complex, see *Architecture* 78-85; and *Monuments* 233-45; regarding architectural elements brought by the Mongols and visible in al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's buildings, see *Architecture* 108-110; and *Monuments* 201-202, 267; and for Sulṭān Ḥasan's complex financed by a windfall of legacies appropriated by the state from victims of the 1348 Black Death, see *Architecture* 122-28; and *Monuments* 76-83.

merely to survive, to the Mamluk military elite struggling to maintain order and retain power.³

These crises were decisive to the religious concerns that dominated the Mamluk period, and both threats were especially acute for the religious authorities who endeavored to ward off chaos and provide solace for the bereaved. Indeed, it was their task to invoke spiritual protection, to oppose those gone astray and re-establish right guidance in the hope that they might set things right with God. Of course, personal, economic, and political privileges were factors in many religious debates and controversies, together with matters of doctrine and ritual. Yet, whatever the particular dispute, a sense of urgency and anxiety was often present regarding the salvation not only of individual Muslim souls, but of the larger Islamic community, as well.⁴

That elements of Sufism were part of these concerns and debates is not surprising for Islamic mysticism was pervasive in Mamluk culture, having been present in Egypt for centuries. By the thirteenth century, the very term Sufi could designate a legitimate professional occupation within the religious establishment, and this fact, alone, calls into question accounts of Mamluk religious life as polarized between “orthodoxy” and “heresy,” or between legists and Sufis. Such two-tier models of religion relegate vital elements of Islam and its mystical tradition to an amorphous “popular” faith at odds with a literate religion of an august elite when, in fact, Sufism’s importance to Muslim life was rarely challenged by religious authorities in the Mamluk period.⁵

³ Concerning the impact of the Mongols see the EI vii, 230-5; for the bubonic plague see Michael W. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton 1977; Second Printing With Corrections 1979).

⁴ Especially see Dols, *Black Death* 109-21, 281-302, and id. ‘Al-Manbijī’s ‘Report of the Plague’: a Treatise on the Plague of 764-65/1362-64 in the Middle East’, in Daniel Williman (ed.), *The Black Death: Impact of the Fourteenth-Century Plague* (Binghamton 1982) 65-75. For the Mongol threat see below p. 231.

⁵ In fact, the very definition of “orthodoxy” is open to question, see Alexander Knysh, ‘Orthodoxy’ and ‘Heresy’ in Medieval Islam: An Essay in Reassessment’, *Muslim World* lxxxiii (1993) 48-67. On the two-tier model and its continued application to Islam see Th. Emil Homerin, ‘Umar Ibn al-Fāriḍ, A Saint of Mamluk and Ottoman Egypt’, in Grace Martin Smith and Carl W. Ernst (eds.), *Manifestations of Sainthood in Islam* (Istanbul 1993) 85-94, esp. 93-94; also see Boaz Shoshan, *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* (Cambridge 1993) 67-78. For a brief survey of Sufis in Egypt from the Islamic conquest through the Mamluk period, see Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara fī akhbār Miṣr wa’l-Qāhira* (Cairo 1903) i, 243-53; ii, 155-64, which is a major source for an account of Sufism in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt by ‘Abd al-Latīf Ḥamza, *al-Ḥaraka al-fikriyya fī Miṣr fī’l-‘asrayn al-Ayyūbi wa’l-*

Yet, while many aspects of Sufism were acceptable to the vast majority of Muslims, particular types of Sufis, and their beliefs and practices were often the target of criticism and censure. A number of such critiques and polemical works suggest that fundamentally at stake were issues of religious authority. Although the Koran and prophetic *sunna* served as the primary sources for Islam's doctrine and ritual, over the centuries Muslims sought to elaborate and enhance the original message in a variety of ways. Individual spiritual inspiration and mystical experiences made their contributions to this endeavor, but the value and authority given to such experiences varied. In the opinion of some scholars, mystical experiences were of limited worth due to their highly personal and individual nature. In so far as these experiences confirmed Islam's fundamental revealed truths, they were of value for infusing the faith with belief and emotive power. Other religious authorities, however, placed a higher premium on mystical states which, they believed, brought the mystic into a close loving relationship with God. For them, mystical experiences were an essential source for both moral purification and gnosis, and so an invaluable asset to Muslim religious life.

What we find, then, was not so much a polarization of religious authorities between mystics and non-mystics but, rather, a gradation of opinion regarding mystical experiences, their content, and value *vis-à-vis* other kinds of authoritative sources. Correspondingly, there was a range of views regarding specific Sufi doctrines, rituals, and related practices — such as the veneration of saints — and their degrees of validity with respect to Islamic law and existing social norms. This, in turn, mirrored a similar flexibility regarding the appropriate models of personal piety and social behavior, and the possible types or “tracks” of religious education available.⁶

Naturally, the place and power of mystical ideas, practices, and practitioners within Mamluk society varied over time and changing circumstance, often reflecting social, economic, and political considerations, as well. Clearly, the religious establishment relied heavily on the patronage of the Mamluk military elite, whose beliefs, aims, and motives were, then, quite influential. But the much poorer masses, too, made their needs and presence felt, and the effects of both groups may be seen in the issues, categories, and language employed

Mamlūkī al-awwal (Cairo 1945?) 95-146, esp. 120-46, 104-12.

⁶ For a general discussion of some of the issues at stake see Steven T. Katz, ‘The ‘Conservative’ Character of Mystical Experience’, in S.T. Katz (ed.), *Mysticism and Religious Traditions* (Oxford 1983) 3-60.

in religious debates, as well as in the outcomes of specific disputes between Sufis and their detractors in the Mamluk empire.

As with political legitimation and military organization, the Mamluk world was in religion, too, the direct heir to developments of the preceding Zangid and Ayyubid period.⁷ During the twelfth-thirteenth centuries, key dimensions of Islamic mysticism coalesced around several issues and personalities which would substantially shape Sufi notions and institutions for centuries. Perhaps the most outstanding figure was Muhyī al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī (560-637/1165-1240) who wrote and taught on reality and the mystical quest for gnosis. His non-dualistic theosophy posits that all existence is the outward appearance of one true and necessary being and, so, things have only a relative, not absolute, existence. To grasp this truth and find real oneness, however, the sincere seeker must devote himself to both study, and a rigorous life of moral and spiritual purification.⁸

A number of Ibn al-ʿArabī's disciples, including Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (605-673/1207-1274) and ʿAfīf al-Dīn al-Tilimsānī (616-690/1219-1291), expounded their own variations of their master's mystical teachings, and these various theosophies were soon referred to collectively under the rubric *waḥdat al-wujūd* or "the unity of being". Adherents of the *wujūdī* school read the Koran and interpreted Islam in light of their own mystical beliefs and experiences, and their ideas and interpretations became a major intellectual force throughout the Islamic world.⁹

Indeed, al-Qūnawī, al-Tilimsānī, and others sought to find *wujūdī* notions in the work of a second major figure of the Ayyubid period, the master Arab poet ʿUmar Ibn al-Fāriḍ (576-632/1181-1235). While there is no credible evidence that this poet knew Ibn al-ʿArabī or his teachings, Ibn al-Fāriḍ's verse is tinged with a mystical and monistic view of life. Ibn al-Fāriḍ was regarded by many of his contemporaries as the greatest poet of his time, and his verse was a do-

⁷ For an overview of Mamluk religious life see Annemarie Schimmel, 'Some Glimpses of Religious Life during the Later Mamluk Period', *Islamic Studies* iv (1965) 353-92, and id. 'Sufismus und Heiligenverehrung im spätmittelalterlichen Ägypten', in Erich Gräf (ed.), *Festschrift für W. Caskel* (Leiden 1968) 274-89; and Donald P. Little, 'Religion Under the Mamluks,' *Muslim World* lxxiii (1983) 165-81.

⁸ For Ibn al-ʿArabī, see EI iii, 707-11; C. Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur* (Cambridge 1993); and William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (Albany 1989).

⁹ EI viii, 753-55; EI, 1st ed., iv 766; and see William Chittick, 'The Five Presences: From al-Qūnawī to al-Qayṣarī', *Muslim World* lxxii (1982) 107-28.

minant force in the Arabic poetry of the Mamluk period. Further, two of his poems — the *Khamriyya*, and the massive *Tāʿiyya kubrā* — became classics of Sufi literature, and *wujūdī* commentators employed both poems as a verse medium through which to spread the doctrines of Ibn al-ʿArabī.¹⁰

Two other celebrated Egyptian mystics, Abū'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Shādhilī (593-656/1196-1258) and al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Badawī (596-675/1200-1276), represent further important religious trends of the time. Both were founders of distinctive Sufi orders, which developed their own particular rules and practices for lay members, as well as for adepts.¹¹ These and other Sufi orders were popular among all strata of Muslim society, and al-Shādhilī and al-Badawī, together with Ibn al-Fāriḍ and Ibn al-ʿArabī, were soon numbered among God's saints, whose spiritual power (*baraka*) and intercession could be called upon by believers in need.¹²

Along with the Sufi orders and cult of the saints came another major institutional development, the rise of establishments known variously as *zāwiyas*, *ribāṭs*, and *khānqāhs*. In general, a *zāwiya* was a meeting place and, occasionally, a residence, for a teacher and a few students. Normally of modest size and endowment, *zāwiyas* were often associated with a specific Sufi master or order. By contrast, *ribāṭs* and *khānqāhs* — the terms were often synonymous — constituted more substantial institutions serving as Sufi hostels; they were designed to provide cells and other accommodations for resident and itinerant mystics, as well as space for communal worship. Increasingly in the Mamluk documents, the term *ribāṭ* came to designate a residence for the poor, indigent, and elderly, while *khānqāh* specified

¹⁰ Th. Emil Homerin, *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Fāriḍ, His Verse, and His Shrine* (Columbia 1994) and esp. 26-32 regarding early *wujūdī* commentaries on the poet.

¹¹ EI, 1st ed. ii, 280-81; EI vii, 246-49; J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford 1971) esp. 44-50; and Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill 1975) 228-58.

¹² Concerning Muslim saints and sainthood see Schimmel, *Dimensions* 199-213; Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, edited and translated by S.M. Stern and C.R. Barber (London 1967-71) ii, 254-341; EI, s.v. *walī*; Frederick M. Denny, 'God's Friends: the Sanctity of Persons in Islam', in Richard Kieckhefer and George D. Bond (eds.), *Sainthood* (Berkeley 1988) 69-97; Michel Chodkiewicz, *Le sceau des saints* (Paris 1986); Jane I. Smith and Yvonne Y. Haddad, *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection* (Albany 1981) 183-91, 241-43; John Alden Williams, *Themes of Islamic Civilization* (Berkeley 1971) 307-70; and Christopher S. Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous. Ziyāra and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt* (Leiden 1999).

a distinctly Sufi establishment.¹³

Whatever its precise origins and early functions, the *khānqāh* by the twelfth century appears to have served Zangid and Ayyubid efforts to support a vigorous Sunni Islam, both ideologically and institutionally. In this sense, the *khānqāhs* were a Sufi parallel to the *madrasas*, institutes of higher education with a primarily legal orientation and curriculum. While *madrasas* might promote sound doctrine and law, the *khānqāh* served as a devotional counterpart for the transmission of correct beliefs, rituals, and exercises involving meditation, invocation, special prayers, and similar spiritual matters.¹⁴

A substantial reason for patronizing Sufis and their *khānqāhs* appears to have been the spiritual power perceived to be vested in the religious classes. Once when preparing for battle against the Crusaders, the Zangid sultan Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd (r. 541-69/1146-74) was urged to divert funds set aside for ascetics, Sufis, and other religious professions in the interests of his war effort. According to one account, Nūr al-Dīn sternly rejected this advice, declaring:

'By God, I can't hope for victory save by means of them, for they sustain and assist the weak among you. How can I cut off the pensions of a folk who, while I'm asleep in my bed, fight for me with arrows that never miss, and then turn around and spend their money on someone whose arrows are hit or miss?'¹⁵

Similarly, as Saladin proclaimed his Ayyubid sultanate in Cairo, he established several *madrasas* and, in 569/1174, the first *khānqāh* in Egypt, the Dār Sa'īd al-Su'adā'. Also known as the al-Ṣalāḥiyya, this *khānqāh* was assigned as a hostel for as many as 300 Sufis arriving from foreign lands. Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī¹⁶ Saladin and his Ayyubid successors undoubtedly patronized members of the religious elite already present in Egypt. But his efforts to promote foreign men of religion in both legal and Sufi matters suggests an attempt to create a

¹³ Donald P. Little, 'The Nature of *Khānqāhs*, *Ribāts*, and *Zāwīyas* Under the Mamlūks', in Wael B. Hallaq and Donald P. Little (eds.), *Islamic Studies Presented to Charles J. Adams* (Leiden 1991) 91-105; Leonor Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution in Mamluk Egypt: the Khānqāh* (Berlin 1988) esp. 10-19; and EI iv, 1025-26; iv, 433-34.

¹⁴ Ḥamza, *al-Ḥaraka* 104-107; EI iv, 1025-26; Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 20-22; and P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades* (London 1986) 80.

¹⁵ Ḥamza, *al-Ḥaraka* 106, who cites the Ayyubid chronicler Ibn Wāṣil (d. 697/1298). Regarding Nūr al-Dīn's patronage of the religious classes, including the Sufis and their *khānqāhs*, see Muḥammad b. Wāṣil, *Mufārrij al-kurūb fī akhbār Banī Ayyūb*, ed. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl (Cairo 1957) i, 263-86, esp. 281-84, and Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī 'l-ta'rīkh* (Beirut 1979) xi, 404-405.

¹⁶ Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 21-25; Trimmingham, *Orders* 18-20; and Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawā'iz wa'l-i'tibār bi-dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa'l-āthār* (Baghdad 1970) ii, 415-16.

religious establishment loyal to him and perhaps, also, a Sunni ideology untainted by Shii or Christian elements. Whatever the case, Saladin's *khānqāh* became a major center of Sufi activity and a prototype for the Mamluks who would later replace his descendants as the champions of Sunni Islam.¹⁷

Faced with the crusader invasion of St. Louis (647-49/1249-50) and the impending threat of a Mongol onslaught (657-58/1259-60), the Mamluks, or royal "slave" soldiers, succeeded their Ayyubid masters to become the ruling dynasty of Egypt, Syria, and the Ḥijāz. The Mamluks proved to be great patrons of the arts and religion, as well as able defenders of the faith. Mamluk forces repeatedly engaged the Mongols who had ravaged vast portions of the Muslim world, including the caliphal capital Baghdad in 1258. This last event was an unprecedented catastrophe for Muslims, as the largely pagan hordes moved inexorably across what had been Muslim domains for centuries. Muslims fled with their families before the Mongols, and many went to Syria and Egypt seeking the protection of their brothers in the faith, the Mamluks.¹⁸

Among the refugees was the family of Aḥmad b. Taymiyya. Ibn Taymiyya (661-728/1263-1328) was a great Ḥanbalī theologian and jurist who zealously attacked anything which he perceived as a threat to true Islam. On several occasions, he took part in or preached *jihād* — against Christians and Shiites, as well as against the Mongols, and he tirelessly opposed religious innovation, which he believed had left the Muslim community in a weak and vulnerable state.¹⁹

For Ibn Taymiyya, Islamic society's most virulent internal disease was caused by beliefs in divine incarnation, mystical union with the

¹⁷ Ḥamza, *al-Ḥaraka* 106-107; Stephen R. Humphreys, 'The Expressive Intent of Mamluk Architecture in Cairo', *Studia Islamica* xxxv (1972) 69-119, esp. 78-87, 93-94; and Holt, *Crusades* 78-81, esp. 50-51, where he notes that in 566/1171, Saladin named a Kurdish jurist and supporter Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Ḥadhabānī as his Sunni chief judge of Egypt. Also see Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo* (Princeton 1992) 130-32.

¹⁸ For a brief largely political history of the Mamluk dynasty see Holt, *Crusades*; and EI vi, 314-31; vii, 165-77. A more detailed account of the Bahri period (1250-1382) is Robert Irwin's *The Middle Ages in the Middle East* (London 1986); for the Burji Period (1383-1517) see Carl F. Petry, *Protectors or Praetorians: The Last Mamlūk Sultans and Egypt's Waning as a Great Power* (Albany 1994). For more on Mamluk religious, social, and political institutions see Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge 1967); and Susan J. Staffa, *Conquest and Fusion: The Social Evolution of Cairo, A.D. 642-1850* (Leiden 1977) esp. 84-226.

¹⁹ For Ibn Taymiyya's biography and bibliography see EI iii, 951-55.

divine, and monism, which he collectively referred to as *ittiḥād* or *ittiḥādiyya*. Both were common Sufi terms for mystical union suggesting a “uniting” or “unification” of two or more things, whether substantially identical (e.g., water mixing with water), or different but indistinguishable (water in milk). Similar to some other conservative Muslims, Ibn Taymiyya regarded belief in union between the divine and human as incarnationism (*ḥulūl/ḥulūliyya*), the “indwelling” or “incarnation” of God or divinity in a creature. Understandably associated with Christianity, incarnationist beliefs and doctrines have been considered by most Muslims to be a form of polytheism. On the other hand, many Sufis maintained that union was metaphorical; since only God truly exists, there is, in fact, no incarnation or uniting (*ittiḥād*), only “unity,” “oneness” (*waḥdāt/tawḥīd*), or a “unity of being” (*waḥdat al-wujūd/ittiḥādiyya*).²⁰

These and similar positions, Ibn Taymiyya asserted, made a travesty of the God-humanity distinction upon which true monotheistic religion was based. Thus he was intractable and outspoken in his condemnation of any mystical writings and their authors whom he believed adhered to the unity of being. These monists, whether out of ignorance or willful disobedience, blatantly encouraged deviation from God’s truth as revealed by the Koran, the *sunna* of Muḥammad, and codified in the divine law.²¹

For polemical and rhetorical purposes, Ibn Taymiyya often reduced abstract and sophisticated mystical doctrines to the grossest pantheism, while at the same time resorting to attacks on personal character. He characterized Ibn Sabʿīn (613-669/1217-1270), for example, as more at home with pagan Hindus than with good Muslims, and in several scathing assaults on al-Tilimsānī, Ibn Taymiyya

²⁰ The precise meaning of these terms may vary due to their varied and particular contexts; see EI iii, 570-71; iv, 282-83.

²¹ Ibn Taymiyya wrote a number of refutations of monism and monists, several of which are found in his *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil wa-ʾl-masāʾil* (=MRM) edited by Muḥammad Rashid Riḍā (Cairo 1922-30; reprint ed. Beirut 1983). These refutations include: *Fī ibṭāl waḥdat al-wujūd* (i, 75-131); *Kitāb Shaykh al-Islām ilāʾl-ʾarīf biʾllāh al-Shaykh Naṣr al-Manbijī* (i, 169-90) and *Ḥaqīqat madhhab al-ittiḥādiyyīn* (iv, 3-114). For other works, and evaluations of Ibn Taymiyya’s opinions regarding speculative Sufism also see the useful study by Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taymiyya’s Struggle Against Popular Religion* (The Hague 1976) esp. 24-46, and Abdul Haq Ansari, ‘Ibn Taymiyya’s Criticism of Sufism’, *Islam and the Modern Age* (August 1984) 147-56; see also the seminal article of Fritz Meier, ‘Das sauberste über die vorbestimmung. Ein stück Ibn Taymiyya’, *Saeculum* xxxii (1981) 74 ff; also published in Fritz Meier, *Bausteine. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Islamwissenschaft*, i-iii (Istanbul-Stuttgart 1992) ii, 696 ff.

claimed that his older contemporary had declared incest lawful based on a belief in absolute monism.²²

In a number of other places, however, Ibn Taymiyya made careful distinctions among the monists, demonstrating his firm grasp of their ideas and works involved. He also noted that Ibn al-[°]Arabī was not as insistent as others on the issue of absolute monism, and Ibn Taymiyya even praised him for respecting the law and paying careful attention to the Sufi path.²³ Nevertheless, Ibn Taymiyya could not tolerate the doctrine of unity underpinning Ibn al-[°]Arabī's teachings. Particularly odious was Ibn al-[°]Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* and his mystical meditations on the Koran, which appeared to pay scant attention to and even pervert the literal message of God's final revelation. Such obvious disregard for the Koran and true Islam by Ibn al-[°]Arabī and others of his ilk had opened the door wide to unbelief and immoral practices.²⁴ Further, because these malignant doctrines of oneness and union had been passed on and spread as correct interpretations of Islam, often in elegant forms such as Ibn al-Fāriḍ's verse, their pernicious effects upon the community were both chronic and latent.²⁵

Rejecting any compromise or accommodation, Ibn Taymiyya declared that refutation of the monists was comparable to Muslims waging holy war against the Mongols.²⁶ The context of this assertion suggests a rhetorical and polemical function, yet it underscores Ibn Taymiyya's deep hatred of both groups. Indeed, in a telling aside on Sufi advocates of oneness, Ibn Taymiyya once mused:

'Often I have thought that the prominence of their like is the major cause for the Mongol conquest and the obliteration of the law of Islam, and that they are the vanguard of the Anti-Christ (*al-Dajjāl*), that one-eyed liar who will declare himself God!'²⁷

Given such a view, Ibn Taymiyya's fanatic and incessant

²² Ibn Taymiyya, *MRM* i, 183-88; iv, 27. Also see Memou, *Struggle* 30-31, 43-44; and Ansari, 'Criticism' 149.

²³ Ibn Taymiyya, *MRM* i, 183; i, 179-82. Also see Ansari, 'Criticism' 148-9; and Menon, *Struggle* 35-46.

²⁴ Ibn Taymiyya, *MRM* iv, 49-50, 53-63, 66-67, 88-94, 103-104; i, 103-111; i, 180-82. Also see Memon, *Struggle* 43-44, 51. Regarding Ibn Taymiyya's position on Koranic exegesis in general see Norman Calder, 'Tafsir from Ṭabari to Ibn Kathīr', in G.R. Hawting and Abdul-Kader A. Shareef, *Approaches to the Qur'ān*, (London 1993) 101-40, esp. 125, 130-33.

²⁵ Ibn Taymiyya, *MRM* i, 130-31; i, 97; i, 185-86.

²⁶ Ibn Taymiyya, *MRM* i, 178. This and the following reference to the Mongols are found in Ibn Taymiyya's epistle to Naṣr al-Manbijī, a supporter of Ibn al-[°]Arabī and spiritual advisor to the powerful amir and later, sultan, Baybars al-Jāshnikir (r. 708-709/1309-1310).

²⁷ Ibn Taymiyya, *MRM* i, 186.

campaign against religious innovation becomes more understandable. Yet together with his near total rejection of speculative mysticism, Ibn Taymiyya explicitly embraced mystical experience and the Sufi path as valuable aids to personal faith. Spiritual inspiration (*ilhām*) or mystical intuition (*dhawq*) could be legitimately employed by believers in their sincere efforts to obey God's will, provided that both were thoroughly grounded in the literal message of the Koran and the prophetic *sunna*. Such grounding was requisite, for a misguided person and a Christian, too, could have a mystical experience or trance.²⁸ In Ibn Taymiyya's view, then, such experiences were no guarantee of religious truth or right guidance, which must be derived from prophetic — not mystical — revelation and Muḥammad's *sunna*. On this basis, Ibn Taymiyya ranked Sufis in three degrees: the truly illumined Sufis, the sincere and civil Sufis of the *khānqāhs*, and Sufis in appearance only. Among this last group were charlatans and other evil folk who led naive Muslims astray, and Ibn Taymiyya actively opposed them and their practices with the same resolve that he displayed against the monists. But Ibn Taymiyya did not number such devious people among the genuine Sufis who practiced love and devotion to God:

'As for the Sufis, they affirm the love (of God) — this is more evident among them than all other issues. The basis of their Way (*ṭarīqa*) is simply will and love. The affirmation of the love of God is well-known in the speech of their early and their recent masters, just as it is affirmed in the Book and the *sunna* and in agreement of the *salaf*.²⁹

Ibn Taymiyya was neither the first nor last critic of Sufi beliefs and practices in the early decades of Mamluk rule. But he was, perhaps, the most systematic, articulate, and vocal of those calling for restrictions and reforms. His influence upon later generations of scholars was pronounced, but this is not to say that Ibn Taymiyya's views were those of the majority of religious scholars, not to mention of Muslims in general. Ibn al-ʿArabī and other speculative mystics had strong support among the religious and ruling elite, whose wrath Ibn Taymiyya felt on several occasions. Further, while Ibn Taymiyya's sincerity and zeal were appreciated by many, his re-

²⁸ Ibn Taymiyya, *MRM* i, 189. Also see Th. Emil Homerin, 'Ibn Taymiyya's *al-Ṣūfiyya wa-al-fuqarā'*', *Arabica* xxxii (1985) 219-44, and Ansari, 'Criticism' 147-56, esp. 151-52.

²⁹ Homerin, 'Ibn Taymiyya' 237, translation by T. Michel, 'Ibn Taymiyya's *Sharḥ* on the *Futūḥ al-ghayb* of 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī', *Hamdard Islamicus* iv, 2, 57. Also see *MRM* i, 133-55, and Memon, *Struggle* 62-66. For several accounts of religious scams in the Mamluk period see Shoshan, *Popular Culture* 9, 18-20, 76-77, and Lapidus, *Cities* 104-107, 180-83; also see Little, 'Religion' 175-78.

ligious certainty led him to confrontations with several respected Sufi shaykhs, including the famous Shādhilī master Ibn ʿAtāʾ Allāh (d. 709/1309). This, together with Ibn Taymiyya's insistent and vociferous condemnation of the popular cult of the saints as polytheism earned him the public's ire and contributed to his final incarceration.³⁰

There was another prominent scholar of the Mamluk period with a disdain for monism, the celebrated historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406). A jurist and judge of the Mālikī school, Ibn Khaldūn is credited with a legal opinion recommending the destruction of monistic writings — particularly works by Ibn al-ʿArabī, al-Tilimsānī, Ibn al-Fāriḍ, and commentaries on the latter's *Tāʾiyya kubrā* — in the interests of preserving “the common good of the community”.³¹ Ibn Taymiyya's influence is apparent in this ruling, as it is in another rebuttal by Ibn Khaldūn to monistic doctrines, contained in a reasoned and sensitive discussion of Islamic mysticism. However, what is especially significant about this second account, found in the *Muqaddima*, is that Ibn Khaldūn explicitly numbers Sufism as one of “the sciences of religious law that originated in Islam” (*min al-ʿulūm al-sharʿiyya al-ḥāditha fī l-milla*).³²

Ibn Khaldūn noted that the Sufi calling to asceticism and to devotion to God were common characteristics of the earliest Muslim community. But succeeding generations became more and more inclined toward worldliness until only a few Muslims remained who sincerely “aspired to divine worship”. These pious folk came to be known as Sufis.³³ Then as Islam became progressively more syste-

³⁰ EI iii, 951-55; Memon, *Struggle* 51-57, 82-85; and Shoshan, *Popular Culture* 12-16, 67-69. Also see Donald P. Little, ‘Did Ibn Taymiyya Have a Screw Loose?’, *Studia Islamica* xli (1975) 93-111; and Niels Henrik Olesen, *Culte des saints et pèlerinages chez Ibn Taymiyya* (Paris 1991). For other critics and controversies involving Sufis or elements of Sufism at this time in the Mamluk empire, see Idris b. Baydakin al-Turkumānī (fl. early 8th/14th c.), *Kūṭab al-lumaʿ fī l-ḥawādith wa l-bidaʿ*, ed. Subhi Labib (Wiesbaden 1986) esp. 76-96, 138-48; Muhammad b. al-Hājj al-ʿAbdarī (d. 737/1336), *al-Madkhal* (Cairo n. d.) iii, 26-218, esp. 93-147; Homerin, *Arab Poet* 30-32, 39-44; and Shoshan, *Popular Culture* 68-69.

³¹ See Ibrāhīm al-Biqāʿī, *Tanbīh al-ghabī ilā takfīr Ibn ʿArabī*, ed. ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Wakil (Cairo 1953) 165-68; and Ṣāliḥ al-Maqbalī (d. 1108/1696), *al-ʿAlam al-shāmikh* (Cairo 1910) 500. Also see Ibn Khaldūn's *Shifāʾ al-sāʾil*, ed. Ignace-Abdo Khalifé (Beirut 1959) esp., 50 ff.; and M. Perlman, ‘Ibn Khaldūn on Sufism’, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* xvii (1960) 222-23; and Franz Rosenthal, *The Muqaddima* (2nd edition, Princeton 1967) xxix-lxvii.

³² Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima* (Beirut n.d.) 467; and Rosenthal translation, iii, 76.

³³ Ibid. 467-68; and Rosenthal iii, 76-77.

matized over the centuries, religious thinkers began to specialize as jurists, theologians, exegetes, and Sufis, with their own formalized studies. Just as jurists composed works on jurisprudence and its principles so, too, Sufi experts wrote on mystical and ecstatic states, and on the rules and practices that might bring sincere Muslims closer to God. Thus, Sufis had developed their own particular practices and terminology, which gradually led to a distinct mystical discipline.³⁴

Ibn Khaldūn clearly viewed Sufism as complementary to other important religious subjects, whose study had developed along parallel lines. In fact, Ibn Khaldūn claimed that there had been strong reciprocal borrowing between early Sufis and extremist Shiites, which was manifest in their respective discussions of spiritual hierarchies and succession. Ibn Khaldūn found these doctrines highly suspect, as he did speculative and monistic assertions recently made by some Sufis. At best, their statements were unverifiable as they were premised on a putative experiential revelation (*kashf*); as such, they were not open to independent verification and, so, were better left alone.³⁵

Holding a position close to that of Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn Khaldūn measured the validity and value of mystical experiences against the Koran, *sunna*, and accepted doctrine. This was indeed necessary because Christian and Hindu ascetics, and other non-Muslims who underwent similar austere practices of fasting and meditation (*dhikr*) could also have mystical experiences and revelations (*kashf*), as well as access to unseen worlds. However, since these peoples had deviated from true belief, their mystical experiences and state (*ḥāl*) were similarly distorted.³⁶

Nevertheless, despite these reservations, Ibn Khaldūn went much farther than Ibn Taymiyya to declare the “science of Sufism” as essential to a Muslim’s true happiness and religious life:

‘The Sufis aspire to total concentration upon God and upon the approach to Him, in order to obtain the mystical experiences of gnosis and Divine oneness (*adhwaq ahl al-‘irfān wa’l-tawḥīd*). In addition to their training in concentration and hunger, the Sufis feed on *dhikr* exercises by which their devotion to that training can fully materialize. When the soul is reared on *dhikr* exercises, it comes closer to the gnosis of God, whereas without it, it comes to be a Sa-

³⁴ Ibid. 469; and Rosenthal iii, 79-80.

³⁵ Ibid. 470-485; and Rosenthal iii, 87-103.

³⁶ Ibid. 470, 108-109; and Rosenthal iii, 82; i, 221-22.

tanīc one'.³⁷

Ibn Khaldūn's account is indicative of Sufism's respected place within Islam, both as a mystical tradition, and as a field of academic inquiry, with its own focused curriculum. As with other religious specialties, students wishing to pursue Sufi studies were required to spend several years in close relationship to teachers in order to master their subject. Given mysticism's highly personal and experiential components, a master-disciple relationship was essential for those wishing to study not only about Sufis, but how to become one.³⁸ The Sufi orders made this possible by providing individual master-student instruction within a communal life organized around mystical teachings and practices, such as seclusion, meditation, and prayer.³⁹

Though masters and orders were pivotal to mystical training, places for Sufi study were much less fixed. *Zāwiyas* and *khānqāhs* were natural and frequent places for such instruction, and endowments sometimes provided students with a place of residence, a stipend, and/or a work-study program. But Sufi masters, similar to other scholars of the period, also taught in mosques, *madrasas*, and private homes where students could gather. Such institutional ambiguity was a product of the flexible character of medieval Islamic education. While serious students normally had a particular religious concentration, such as Shādhilī Sufism or Shāfi'ī law, they also read and studied other religious subjects, in general.⁴⁰

A similar flexibility is readily apparent in religious occupations, where any number of teaching and administrative positions were open to Sufis with the proper qualifications and/or political backing. Conversely, a minimum of Sufi studies could qualify even a non-specialist for a position within several distinctive, if fluid, career tracks involving mysticism. There was a range of opportunities available, from occupations such as teachers, preachers, and coun-

³⁷ Ibid. 109, 474; and Rosenthal i, 222; iii, 100.

³⁸ Regarding the teacher-student relationship in the Mamluk world see Berkey, *Knowledge* 21-43, esp., 26-27; and Perlman, 'Ibn Khaldūn' 222.

³⁹ Schimmel, *Dimensions* 228-58; and Trimmingham, *Orders* 1-30.

⁴⁰ Berkey, *Knowledge* 44-60, 74; Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 13-16. Ibn Khaldūn, though an exceptional scholar, was probably not an exception in having studied something of Sufism, while mastering Mālikī law. Conversely, the Shādhilī Sufi master Ibn 'Atā' Allāh had studied Mālikī law. Significantly, when Ibn 'Atā' Allāh initially choose to pursue legal studies, fellow students cautioned him not to become too involved with Sufism if he expected to become a legal specialist; see Victor Danner, *Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh: The Book of Wisdom* (New York 1978) 23-27.

selors among the Muslim public at large, to more exclusive religious-political positions as spiritual advisors to sultans and amirs. A few living shaykhs were also sought out for blessings, *baraka*, and *karāmāt* popularly associated with the cult of the saints.⁴¹

Probably the largest employer of Sufis were the *khānqāhs*, at least twenty of which were endowed and built by Mamluk patronage. Though not all of them were in operation concurrently, by a conservative estimate, there must have been hundreds of Sufis in *khānqāh* residence at any given time in the fourteenth century. In addition to receiving food and lodging, these Sufis normally received monthly stipends and gifts of food, clothes, and money on special occasions. *Khānqāh* residents might also augment this sum by performing specific religious duties, such as leading prayers, reciting the Koran, or by carrying out more mundane tasks for the *khānqāh*, such as cooking and cleaning. Of course, top administrative positions within the *khānqāh* such as *shaykh* or, later, *shaykh al-shuyūkh*, were particularly lucrative and so became sources of contention among the religious elite, no matter what their specialty.⁴²

On a political level, Mamluk patronage of the *khānqāhs* undoubtedly aimed to influence Sufis and other members of the religious establishment who might benefit from the endowments. The amirs and sultans, however, clearly frequented the rites and ceremonies at the *khānqāhs* for spiritual and aesthetic reasons, and in times of plague, the sultans may have sought out the *khānqāhs*, particularly those in the desert, as places of spiritual power and refuge.⁴³ Yet,

⁴¹ See, for example, Shoshan, *Popular Culture* 9-22, 76-77; Lapidus, *Cities* 107-115, 135-37; Carl F. Petry, *The Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton 1981) 221-23; Berkey, *Knowledge* 90, 118, 125, 195; Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 96-97, 101-104; and Holt, *Crusades* 151-52.

⁴² Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 20-68; Muhammad M. Amīn, *al-Awqāf wa'l-hayāt al-ijtimā'iyya fī Miṣr: 648-923 A. H./1250-1517 A. D.* (Cairo 1980) 204-208. Also see Homerin, *Arab Poet* 39-44.

⁴³ Several sultans are known to have gone to *khānqāhs* during outbreaks of plague, though it proved to be no protection; still, this may have been one motive for building in the desert area outside of Cairo; see Dols, *Black Death* 157, 167, 248-50; and Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 104-108; also see Schimmel, 'Religious Life' 376-80. Nevertheless, the Sultans at least partially intended these imposing desert *khānqāhs* to be architectural expressions of Mamluk power and authority, as well as of Islam's dominant position in the land; see Humphreys, 'Expressive Intent' 83, 90-91, 117-19, esp. 91, n. 2. L. Fernandes, 'Three Sūfī Foundations in a 15th Century Waqfiyya', *Annales Islamologiques* xviii (1981) 144-45, has suggested further that at least one desert *khānqāh* — that of Bars Bāy's (r. 824-41/1421-37) — was part of a conscious policy to relieve urban congestion. Though intriguing, her suggestion is not

whatever the case, these services were in addition to the major task assigned the Sufis by the deeds of endowment, namely the *wazīfat al-taṣawwuf*, the “Sufi duty”. This duty was the *ḥuḍūr*, the daily congregation of Sufis to perform communal readings from the Koran and prayers. So important was this task that the attendance of the Sufis was strictly required and regulated; teaching or other activities stipulated by the endowments were of a secondary nature and scheduled around the *ḥuḍūr* session.⁴⁴

The centrality and importance of the *ḥuḍūr* stem from the fact that most *khānqāhs* and many other religious establishments endowed by the Mamluks were characterized by the presence in or near them of the founder’s tomb and/or the graves of his relatives. By means of their pious endowments, Mamluk patrons intended to surround their graves with religious activities and pious men whose blessings and *baraka* might then flow over and be absorbed by the founder and his family.⁴⁵ But in contrast to these diffuse and rather fortuitous blessings were the focused and regularized benefits of the *ḥuḍūr*. Indeed, a major feature of many *khānqāh* endowment deeds is not only that they stipulate *ḥuḍūr* performance, but that they also designate its appointed times, as well as some of the Koranic passages to be read, and prayers to be said.

Almost invariably, sessions were to be held immediately after one or more of the five canonical prayers. Specific Koranic passages often included the *āyat al-kursī* or “Throne Verse” (2/256), chapters *al-ikhhlāṣ* (112), *al-fātiḥa* (1), the final two surahs known as the *al-mu‘awwidhatān* (i.e., the two requests for refuge with God = 113-114), and the beginning and end of *al-baqara* (2). Prayers were a combination of repetitions (*dhikr*) usually of God’s praise (*tamhīd*), declarations of God’s greatness (*tabbīr*), glory (*tasbīḥ*), and power (*tahlīl*), prayers for the prophet Muḥammad, and petitions for God’s forgiveness (*istighfār*). These recitations and prayers were to be said

convincing given the fact that following the Black Death of 1348-50, Cairo’s population dramatically declined and never recovered until much later in the sixteenth century; see Dols, *Black Death*, esp. 183-85.

⁴⁴ Amīn, *al-Awqāf* 208-10; Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 18, 54-58, 119 n. 37; and Berkey, *Knowledge* 59-60, 79-81, 84-85.

⁴⁵ Humphreys, ‘Expressive Intent’ 112-19; Berkey, *Knowledge* 143-46. Of course, there were political motives and economic considerations involved with most endowments involving the donor’s relatives and benefactors who usually oversaw the endowments; see Amīn, *al-Awqāf* 69-98; Carl F. Petry, ‘A Paradox of Patronage During the Later Mamluk Period’, *Muslim World* lxxiii (1983) 182-207, esp. 190-95; Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 4-9; and Berkey, *Knowledge* 134-42.

on behalf of the donor and his family, who were named as recipients of a portion of the session's religious merits and divine blessings.⁴⁶

The wording of the endowment deeds indicates that these were not idiosyncratic or random recitations and prayers, but established invocations and appeals (*duʿāʾ*), largely on behalf of the dead. This is borne out by several popular Mamluk manuals on dying, death, and the afterlife; they cite the exact Koranic passages and prayers specified in the endowment deeds, as being the most efficacious for helping the dead. These Koranic recitations and prayers on behalf of the dead were believed to ease their tortured time in the grave and to atone for their past misconduct so that, on the Day of Judgment, the deceased would arise pure for paradise.⁴⁷

The *ḥudūr*, then, was the vital task assigned to the *khānqāh* Sufis who, due to their ascetic lives and training in such recitations and prayers, were regarded as the most able to achieve positive spiritual results. But the Sufis' prayers were not only for the dead, they were also dedicated to living Muslims, who often feared that they would be numbered among the dead all too soon, especially in times of famine or plague. During those crises, Sufis and other members of the religious establishment gathered for special services and prayers. Though such ceremonies may not have averted God's tests of His creation, they might, at least, have eased some of the salvation and survival anxiety felt by individuals and the community at large.⁴⁸

Given the religious importance of the *ḥudūr* in Mamluk society and the number and size of the *khānqāhs*, it is not surprising that they were scrutinized by religious officials who criticized lapses in standards and practice. It should be stressed, however, that the insti-

⁴⁶ For partial texts of some of these deeds see Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 54-58; and Amīn, *al-Awqāf* 211-16. Further evidence that these *ḥudūr* recitations, prayers, and related activities were standard may be found in Muḥammad al-Asyūṭī's (b. 813/1410) notarial manual *Jawāhir al-ʿuqūd*, ed. Muḥammad Hāmid al-Fiḳī (Cairo 1955) i, 356-59, where he cites them in his formulary for a *khānqāh* endowment deed; see Little, 'Khānqāhs' 98-99.

⁴⁷ See Muḥammad al-Qurṭubī (d. 681/1273) *al-Tadhkirā fī aḥwāl al-mawtā wa-umūr al-ākhirā* (Cairo 1986) i, 118-31; Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (839-911/1445-1505) *Sharḥ al-sudūr bi-sharḥ al-mawtā wa'l-qubūr*, edited by Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Himṣī (Beirut 1986) 406, 409, 411-12, 416-21, 424, and EI ii, 617-18. In terms of function, then, the *khānqāh* is a striking parallel to the chantries of Medieval England — such as All Souls College — founded around this same time by kings and queens with the express purpose of saying mass on behalf of both the dead and the living so as to free them from Purgatory. For medieval chantries see T. S. R. Boase, *Death in the Middle Ages* (London 1972) 59-69.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Dols, *Black Death* 236-55, esp. 248-53; Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 42, 106-108; and Petry, *Protectors* 105.

tution's legitimacy and mission were rarely in question. A critical scholar such as Ibn Taymiyya approved of both praying on behalf of others, and of the "funded Sufis" (*ṣūfiyyat al-arzāq*) of the *khānqāhs*, provided that they followed the sharia and accepted Sufi rules of conduct, while avoiding religious innovation and the pursuit of wealth.⁴⁹ But, here was a problem.

Endowment deeds and other Mamluk sources indicate that the Sufi profession could be a means to accrue substantial material benefits. Of course such commercial use and practice were deemed inappropriate with regard to any religious office. But it was particularly audacious when such blatant and hypocritical manipulation involved Islamic mysticism, which held poverty (*faqr*) as a foundational principle. Publicly deploring such abuses were a number of respected scholars of the Mamluk period, including the famous scholar and biographer, Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (727-771/1327-1370).⁵⁰

A Shāfiʿī jurist and judge, and a partisan of Sufi pietism, al-Subkī denounced the impostors who had given the true Sufis a bad name. With an eye to reform, al-Subkī urged a careful evaluation of the *khānqāhs* and their residents, advocating a policy of close scrutiny to determine the extent to which Sufis might be entangled in worldly affairs, whether for wealth, power, or reputation. According to al-Subkī, an individual could properly reside in a *khānqāh* to cover only the minimum living expenses enabling him to pursue a mystical life. As for those who entered to obtain a livelihood supporting a way of life devoid of asceticism and constant worship, they must be turned out of the *khānqāh*; these liars — Sufis in dress only — violated the conditions of the endowment which stipulated that residents be true Sufis. Al-Subkī felt that many residents fell into this category of worthless sluggards who used the *khānqāh* as a cover for their lives of perfidy, hashish use, and absorption in worldly ephemera. The sooner such frauds were exposed and run out, the better it would be for the *khānqāhs* and the sincere brethren there, who re-

⁴⁹ Homerin, 'Ibn Taymiyya' 233, 243, and EI ii, 617. The Ḥanbalī scholar Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200) is exceptional in that not only did he denounce the immoral behaviors and practices which he believed filled Sufi residences (*ribāṭs*) but he also held that the institution from its inception was an innovation and error, and among the Devil's delusions of the Sufis; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs al-Iblīs* (Cairo n.d.) 169-70.

⁵⁰ For al-Subkī see ʿUmar Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifin* (Damascus 1957) vi, 225-226. For other critiques of the *khānqāh* Sufis see Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 11, 96-103; Schimmel, 'Glimpses' 379-80.

sponsibly fulfilled their obligations in total devotion to God.⁵¹

Al-Subkī's critique should be read in context of the persistent criticisms leveled against the religious class as a whole for their love of wealth and reputation; al-Subkī also denounced the prevalent custom of scholars holding a number of positions simultaneously. In fact, several endowment deeds specifically forbade any such practice among the Sufis to be employed by the endowment.⁵² This, together with al-Subkī's remarks, and those by other members of the Mamluk religious establishment reflect, to a degree, the effects of the steep economic decline in the final century and a half of Mamluk rule. The Black Death of 1348-49 had devastated the population of Egypt and Syria, and successive waves of the plague over the next centuries made certain that the economy would not soon recover. Further, though the Mongols were no longer a menace, Mamluk sultans extracted heavy taxes in order to restock their supply of slave soldiers killed by the plague, and to ward off foreign threats, usually to their outlying territories in Syria and Anatolia.⁵³

Several new and architecturally impressive *khānqāhs* were endowed in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but overall Mamluk support for Sufis and other religious professionals probably declined substantially. Some *khānqāhs* fell into ruin, while others were combined with *madrasas*, and salaries for the religious occupations were often reduced or in arrears. Of course, the religiously essential *ḥudūr* continued to be performed by Sufis, but increasingly this occurred at many, more economical, mosque-tomb complexes favored by the Mamluks of this period. Though Sufis were paid for their services, they did not necessarily receive room and board. This may also partially account for an apparent increase in the smaller and, hence, cheaper *zāwīyas* at this time, as Sufis sought a mystical communal life and residence elsewhere.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Muʿīd al-niʿam wa-mubīd al-niqam*, ed. David Myhrman (Leiden 1908) 171-80, esp. 178-79; al-Subkī cites several colorful criticisms of such frauds by others.

⁵² Berkey, *Knowledge* 182-88; 31-33; Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 24, 27-28, 31, 34, 38, 44-45, and her 'Three Sūfi Foundations' 151.

⁵³ Dols, *Black Death* 178-231, 261-80; Petry, *Civilian Elite*, 19-36; Petry, *Protectors*.

⁵⁴ Fernandes, *Khānqāh* 37-46, 111-13, and her 'Some Aspects of the Zāwīya in Egypt at the Eve of the Ottoman Conquest', *Annales Islamologiques* xix (1983) 9-17; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, 'Change in Function and Form of Mamluk Religious Institutions', *Annales Islamologiques* xxi (1985) 73-93, esp. 81-93; and D. Behrens-Abouseif and L. Fernandes, 'Sufi Architecture in the Early Ottoman Period', *Annales Islamologiques* xx (1984) 103-14. For an insightful example of the economic decline of the *khānqāh* in the late fourteenth century and one resulting in disputes among the religious class, see the incident involving Jalāl

The overall economic decline in the fifteenth century undoubtedly affected the religious establishment by increasing competition and tension, as individuals struggled to maintain their positions or to acquire new ones. Disputes invariably arose on a variety of topics and, periodically, around Sufi doctrine and practice. The focus of several quarrels involved the status of *wahdat al-wujūd*, the legality of mystical exegesis (*ta'wīl*), and the roles of mystical experience and the cult of the saints within Islam. As Ibn Taymiyya and other detractors of Sufism had realized at least a century earlier, these issues posed a formidable challenge to their attempts to delimit a final absolute law binding for all. Both monism and mystical exegesis denied the existence a simple literal Truth, while mystical experience and the saints offered direct access to spiritual power largely beyond the range of scholarly supervision. But debates on such complex theological issues were not merely academic; they inevitably involved disputes of a much more mundane nature where the stakes could be very high, as Ibrāhīm al-Biqā'ī was to learn.⁵⁵

When Qā'it Bāy assumed the sultanate in 872/1468, he faced an empty treasury and a desperate need to campaign against Shāh Suwār (d. 876/1471), the Ottoman backed Dulkadirli ruler of Elbistān. Qā'it Bāy quickly began to extort gifts from the people and to appropriate as much money and moveable property as possible. As part of this financial program, Qā'it Bāy seized savings from the religious scholars, cut their wages, and annulled arrears owed them. Not surprisingly, then, Qā'it Bāy's foreign crisis was matched by a domestic one of exorbitant prices and lawlessness, which was further exacerbated by an outbreak of plague, and it was at this time, in the years 874-875/1469-1470, that the Ibn al-Fāriḍ controversy broke out and spread in Cairo.⁵⁶

For many Egyptian Muslims, Ibn al-Fāriḍ had become a cultural and religious icon, and his grave was a popular pilgrimage site for people of all classes. In addition, several Mamluk amirs had recently

al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī when he was the *shaykh* of the Baybarsiyya *Khānqāh* in 906/1501, detailed by E. M. Sartin in *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī* (Cambridge 1975) i, 94-102; 127-28.

⁵⁵ For some of the issues involved and several controversies at this time see Homerin, *Arab Poet* 31, 55-60, 67; and Alexander Knysh, 'Ibn 'Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition', in S. Hirtenstein and M. Tiernan (eds.), *Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi: A Commemorative Volume* (Rockport 1993) 307-27. Also see al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ahdal (d. 855/1451), *Kashf al-ghīṭā' 'an ḥaqā'iq al-tawḥīd*, ed. Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd (Tunis 1964) esp. 13-16 of the introduction; and Sartin, *al-Suyūṭī* i, 53-60.

⁵⁶ See Homerin, *Arab Poet* 60-75, for a detailed account of the following controversy.

provided endowments for the grave, bequeathing revenues to erect a domed shrine with an attendant and a *zāwiya* with resident Sufis, and to finance the celebration of the poet's *mawlid* or "saint's day".⁵⁷ Perhaps these attentions during a period of severe economic crisis offended some religious scholars who took exception to the regime's revenue policy, as well as to Ibn al-Fāriḍ's verse.

In any case, following a public reading of a *wujūdī* commentary on the *Tā'iyya kubrā*, several religious scholars issued legal opinions condemning *waḥdat al-wujūd* and Ibn al-Fāriḍ's use of the feminine gender for God. Those opposed to Ibn al-Fāriḍ included several senior religious officials, including the chief Ḥanafī judge Muḥammad Ibn al-Shiḥna (804-890/1401-1485), and the chief Ḥanbalī judge, ascetic, and Sufi, °Izz al-Dīn al-Kinānī (800-876/1397-1471). But the ring-leader — and, perhaps, instigator — of the controversy was the Shāfi'ī scholar Ibrāhīm al-Biqā'ī (809-885/1407-1480).

In several inflammatory attacks, al-Biqā'ī denounced Ibn al-Fāriḍ and his supporters as followers of Ibn al-°Arabī; their belief in absolute unity annulled the separation between the Creator and His creation, destroying the basis of Islamic law. Quoting verses from the *Tā'iyya kubrā*, al-Biqā'ī charged Ibn al-Fāriḍ with declarations of human-divine union and monism (*ittiḥād*), and with violations of the literal meaning of the Koran and the *sunna*. Further, al-Biqā'ī forbade metaphorical readings and interpretation (*ta'wīl*) of the poem, maintaining that symbolism, metaphor, or technical terminology could not be sound if they contradicted the letter of the law. If such interpretations were allowed, not even Christians and Jews could be accused of infidelity, and surely morality would be overturned. Al-Biqā'ī warned those who wished to quell the controversy that they should defend the faith against what was morally repugnant, especially the heretical doctrines of Ibn al-Fāriḍ and Ibn al-°Arabī. As for those who openly praised Ibn al-Fāriḍ or attempted to defend him as a saint, they were obviously ignoramuses, heretics, or infidels. These people, and heretics such as Ibn al-Fāriḍ, were worse than thieves, for whereas the latter robbed their victims of material possessions, the former made off with the spiritual good of the community by leading Muslims astray.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Th. Emil Homerin, 'The Domed Shrine of Ibn al-Fāriḍ', *Annales Islamologiques* xxv-xxvi (1989-90) 125-30.

⁵⁸ Homerin, *Arab Poet* 62-64. Al-Biqā'ī's major polemic was the *Ṣawāb al-jawāb li'l-*

Al-Biqā'ī's condemnation of Ibn al-Fāriḍ and Ibn al-ʿArabī, along with his blanket ruling of infidelity against their supporters — not to mention his shrill, self-righteous tone — offended a number of his colleagues. Over a dozen of them publicly defended the poet, and several including the renowned scholar, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (839-911/1445-1505), wrote refutations of al-Biqā'ī. In their opinion, illumined gnostics like Ibn al-Fāriḍ had access to an experiential knowledge derived from union with the Divine. Those opposed to Ibn al-Fāriḍ could hardly fathom this profound experience and the unique, certain vision (*kashf*) which it offered, and these literalists were in no position to judge the sayings and writings of genuine gnostics. Ibn al-Fāriḍ was innocent of all charges brought against him, and he was a great saint whose poetry should be read and whose grave should be visited. As for al-Biqā'ī and other narrow-minded critics, they had hurt only themselves.⁵⁹

Al-Biqā'ī fired back calling his opponents liars and infidels, and he enlisted the support of Ibrāhīm al-Matbūlī (d. 877/1472). A Sufi popular for feeding many people from his farm and hostel as food prices soared, al-Matbūlī dismissed Ibn al-Fāriḍ by saying: 'He and those like him fill the world with clamor! None of them has been given enough of the divine mystery to cover a mosquito's proboscis!'"⁶⁰ But Ibn al-Fāriḍ's supporters stood firm, blasting al-Biqā'ī and his allies with invective poems, which were attached to Ibn al-Fāriḍ's shrine for all to read. One poem declared:⁶¹

ʿUmar Ibn al-Fāriḍ, the wise one,
all thought falls short before him!
No one would wrong him save a fool,
so reject the fool; be pleased with ʿUmar!

sāʿil al-murtāb al-muʿarīḍ al-mujādīl fi kufr Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Ms. Leiden Or. 2040, 39a-64a. Al-Biqā'ī composed two further refutations: *Kitāb al-Nāṭiq bi'l-ṣawāb al-fārid li-takfīr Ibn al-Fāriḍ*, Ms. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Arabici I, 68-69 (Marsh. 642) 48b-292b, and *al-Radd al-kāshif li-murād ahl al-ittiḥād*, Ms. Or. Leiden 2040, 64a-190b. Al-Biqā'ī also denounced Ibn al-Fāriḍ in two polemics aimed at monists in general and Ibn al-ʿArabī, in particular: the *Tanbih al-ghabī ilā takfīr Ibn ʿArabī*, and his *Tahdhīr al-ʿibād min ahl al-ʿinād*. Both were edited by ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Wakīl in *Masraʿ al-taṣawwuf* (Cairo 1953).

⁵⁹ Homerin, *Arab Poet* 64-65. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Qamʿ al-muʿarīḍ fi nuṣrat Ibn al-Fāriḍ*, in ʿAbd al-Khāliq Maḥmūd ʿAbd al-Khāliq (ed.), *Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī wa'l-taṣawwuf al-Islāmī* (Cairo 1987) 48-102.

⁶⁰ ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Cairo 1965) ii, 77-80; also see Schimmel, 'Religious Life' 380-81.

⁶¹ Muḥammad b. Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr fi waqāʾiʿ al-duḥūr*, edited by Muḥammad Muṣṭafā (Cairo 1984) iii, 47-49. The poet was Muḥammad b. Qānṣūh min Ṣādiq, primarily a court poet of the late fifteenth-early sixteenth centuries; see Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam* xi, 148-49.

The invectives and feuding raged for over seven months suggesting that the Ibn al-Fāriḍ controversy involved more than Sufi doctrine and practice, though both, of course, were central issues. The political and economic crisis beginning Qāʾit Bāy's reign had evoked a response from religious conservatives who demanded a return to the Islam of their pious forefathers and the suppression of suspected religious innovation. While Ibn al-Fāriḍ's supporters had a broader, more inclusive view of Islam, the controversy was not a conflict between mystics and legal authorities, as Sufis, jurists, and judges from among the four major law schools were numbered among the advocates of both sides. Old grudges and personal scores, however, were obviously a factor, and generational conflict may have been important as well.

At the time of the dispute, the major antagonists of Ibn al-Fāriḍ were elder scholars, sixty years or older. By contrast, the majority of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's supporters were between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-five thus representing the next generation of senior religious officials. The Ibn al-Fāriḍ debate, then, could have been used by both young and old to promote or defend their own self-interests. In fact, several of al-Biqāʿī's contemporaries insinuated that he may have instigated and sustained the dispute in an attempt to procure professional notoriety and advancement.⁶²

If this was the case, al-Biqāʿī severely misjudged the affair's political dimensions. Given the empire's instability and strained economy, Qāʾit Bāy could not afford a prolonged religious conflict, which might further unsettle his already precarious situation. More specifically, al-Biqāʿī had directly challenged Qāʾit Bāy by threatening one of his most dependable amirs, Barqūq al-Nāṣirī (d. 877/1472), who had been one of the original patrons of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's shrine; at the time of the controversy, Barqūq was the overseer for its endowments. Al-Biqāʿī's charges of infidelity had implicated Barqūq and others involved with the shrine, and Qāʾit Bāy could not afford to alienate one of his most reliable amirs to serve the controversial cause of several elder scholars.⁶³

Qāʾit Bāy thus forcefully resolved the affair. Backed by a legal opinion exonerating Ibn al-Fāriḍ and his supporters from charges of heresy and infidelity, Qāʾit Bāy began to purge the senior religious

⁶² See Homerin, *Arab Poet* 65-69, for details.

⁶³ Ibid. 60-62, 68-73; and see Petry, *Protectors*, esp. 42-46, for more on Qāʾit Bāy's economic and political problems at this time.

officials who had opposed Ibn al-Fāriḍ in the controversy. Qāʾit Bāy subsequently bestowed many of their former offices and holdings on Ibn al-Fāriḍ's younger supporters, and the new sultan may have found the controversy useful for realigning the religious hierarchy in a balance more favorable to himself.⁶⁴

As for al-Biqāʿī, he was publicly disgraced and packed off to Damascus where, a few years later, he was nearly executed by several Mamluk amirs. In the end, perhaps al-Biqāʿī realized that his efforts to radically restrict Sufi thought and practice were doomed to failure. Opposed by many religious scholars, Mamluk amirs, the sultan himself, and by the larger populace, as well, al-Biqāʿī and his allies found themselves in an untenable position. Like Ibn Taymiyya nearly two centuries before, they stood in futile resistance to strong, prevailing currents in Islamic mysticism, and above all, in open opposition to the religious, political, and popular consensus of their Muslim community.

⁶⁴ See Homerin, *Arab Poet* 73-75, for details.

QUELQUES MODALITÉS D'OPPOSITION ENTRE MARABOUTS. MYSTIQUES ET ÉLITES DU POUVOIR, EN ALGÉRIE A L'ÉPOQUE OTTOMANE

KAMEL FILALI

La mystique maraboutique, proprement maghrébine, tire ses principes de la *murābaṭa*. A la différence du soufisme oriental la transmission initiatique du maraboutisme se combine avec l'hérédité de la *baraka*, "marqueur" perpétuel de sainteté. Cela lui confère une sacralisation, en quelque sorte par la référence constante à l'ancestral nobiliaire et religieux du charifisme.¹ Enfin, il y a le maraboutisme individualiste des *suwwāḥa* (pérégrinants), et le maraboutisme sélectif de groupe qui par sa légitimité historique, basée sur la noblesse et la gloire des aïeux prosélytes, arriva à se fixer sur le terroir et fonda à partir du quatorzième siècle des "fiefs maraboutiques" que bon nombre de tribus prenaient comme éponymes dans leur généalogie.

Dès les premiers temps, il était très rare de trouver au Maghreb, des saints initiés proprement dit, des soufis qui ne sont pas d'origine nobiliaire *sharīf* et "combattants de la foi" (en temps de guerre). Vraisemblablement dans un but de renforcement de l'aspect de sacralisation, de puissance, de rayonnement et d'aménagement social, la mystique maghrébine opta pour une sacralisation généalogique et spiritualiste. Abū Ya'azza (mort en 572/1177), saint d'origine berbère, qui fut, dit-on, le premier initié à la gnose orientale, était l'un des plus illustres chérifs. Le berbère rifain (du Rif marocain), Ibn Mashīsh² (mort en 625/1228), et Abū Madyan³ le *quṭb* (pôle) de la mystique maghrébine qui naquit à Séville, en Andalousie, vers l'année 520/1126, étaient, sans contredit, des saints initiés et héréditaires de la noblesse chérifide.

Enfin, après avoir cumulé tant de signes sanctificateurs, par le

¹ Sur le charifisme cf. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Tijānī, *al-'Iqd al-jumān fī dhikr al-a'yān*, *Revue africaine* xxxv (1891) 244-250.

² Louis Rinn, *Marabouts et khouan* (Alger 1884) 219.

³ Naquit ca. 509/1115-6, mort 594/1198; cf. Vincent Cornell, *The Way of Abū Madyan* (Cambridge, Mass. 1996) 1-15.

charifisme, et par le *ribāṭ* (*jihād*) collectif et guerrier,⁴ à l'époque qui nous occupe, le maraboutisme très expansif et imprégnant, débordant toutes les formes légales de la mystique islamique, se renforçait de multiples signes et symboles sacrés. Frondeur, '*Il dispute non seulement au sultan, mais au juriste et au théologien le primat social*'.⁵

Composite et confusionniste, le mysticisme maghrébin était, comme nous l'avons esquissé, principalement maraboutique. Malgré l'interférence historique, il est parfois très difficile de différencier, à partir de la fin du quinzième siècle, le saint soufi du marabout. Un seul personnage peut être en effet soufi, chérif, marabout et adepte d'une congrégation mystique, voire fondateur d'une confrérie.

On peut dire que la mystique maghrébine, et notamment algérienne, n'était en fait qu'une synthèse de la mystique soufie et du charifisme basé sur la noblesse religieuse et la *murābaṭa*. Saints soufis et saints marabouts se superposaient subtilement au fil des années et finissaient par donner naissance, en Algérie, à partir du dix-huitième siècle, à des confréries hybrides alourdies par de multiples habits de sainteté. Rien de plus naturel que les luttes du sacré contre le profane et que l'antipathie du pouvoir politique envers la mystique.

Bien que puissante par son influence, fondée sur le rayonnement spirituel, la mystique au Maghreb n'était pas sans nombreux ennemis. L'opposition aux saints mystiques est très ancienne et remonte au douzième siècle, époque de l'apparition des premiers saints initiés au Maghreb. Historiquement, les premiers opposants étaient les exotéristes, '*ulamā' al-zāhir*', et les juristes, '*ahl al-sharī'a*', investis par les dirigeants politiques. Pour préserver l'orthodoxie et maintenir leur suprématie sacerdotale, leur situation et leur influence, les *ulama* gravitant autour des palais, ont réagi dès les premiers temps contre l'émergence de la mystique. Pour des raisons dogmatiques, spiritualistes et parfois politiques, sous l'alibi de l'orthodoxie, la mystique se voit confrontée à une série de détracteurs.

Les monarchies maghrébines nourrissaient une très ancienne opposition contre la mystique expansionniste et séditeuse. Affichant les premiers leur antagonisme à la mystique, sultans et émirs virent

⁴ La *murābaṭa*, ici, synonyme de *mujāhada*: individuellement monacale dirigée contre l'âme négative, et collectivement combative contre les mécréants.

⁵ Jacques Berque, *L'intérieur du Maghreb, XVe-XIXe siècle* (Paris 1982) 56.

d'un œil prévenu et antipathique des religieux spirituellement très influents et très populaire, qui s'inspiraient de leurs contradictions politiques et de leur iniquité sociale (*ẓulm*) pour se dresser parfois directement et ouvertement contre leur pouvoir séculier.

Pendant les trois siècles qui précédèrent l'époque ottomane, la mystique maraboutique, efficace symbole communautaire, plus affirmée sur les espaces maghrébins, encouragée par la crise multidimensionnelle qui frappa le Maghreb, trouva des conditions favorable à son développement. En revanche, les sultans épouvantés de ces "moines", contraignants par leurs préceptes très dogmatiques et menaçants par leur rigorisme et leur austérité, s'opposèrent d'emblée à ces "loqueteux" qui semblaient leur forcer la main. La mystique révolutionnaire, ne cachant pas ses préceptes et ses revendications militantes, regardait les membres des lignées seigneuriales,⁶ comme des perfides vivant dans un luxe extravagant et profanateur, prêts à sacrifier les intérêts de la nation (*umma*) et de la religion. Enfin, cette mystique est jugée en fonction de l'opposition entre sa morale et celle de l'Etat. Celui-ci s'arroge le droit de la contrôler et de la stigmatiser par l'intermédiaire des *'ulamā'* dépositaires de la légitimité canonique.

Les États Maghrébins, qui se sont succédés depuis les Almoravides (1039-1147) jusqu'aux Ziyānides (1235-1557), virent en la mystique un concurrent nuisible à leur pouvoir ainsi qu'aux prestiges et aux honneurs dont ils jouissaient depuis la nuit des temps. Ils nourrissaient de perpétuelles craintes pour la tranquillité de leur royaume et la sûreté de leur trône.

Les modes d'oppositions étaient si violents, notamment aux douzième et au treizième siècles, qu'ils aboutissaient souvent à des assassinats: gêné par les prêches mystiques et l'ascendance d'Ibn al-[°]Arif (un soufi originaire de Tanger, Maroc), mort en 536/1141,⁷ l'émir Almoravide [°]Alī b. Yūsuf, ordonna de l'empoisonner avant même de le juger.⁸ Les accusations les plus déshonorantes, les pratiques les plus humiliantes et les procédés les plus virulents furent surtout réservés aux saints les plus illustres des pionniers de la

⁶ Fernand Braudel les assimile aux barons français de l'époque; cf. son *Méditerranée et monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris 1982).

⁷ Celui-ci passa une grande partie de sa vie à se recycler dans les centres de la mystique intellectualiste à Almería (Andalousie) — où avaient retenti les premiers cris anti-mystiques et où furent brûlés, en premier, les œuvres de al-Ghazālī.

⁸ Alfred Bel, *Les confréries religieuses musulmanes en Afrique du Nord* (Paris 1878) 380.

mystique maghrébine. Abū Tujīn, un thaumaturge très favorable à l'Émir, faisant, dit-on, métier de sorcier, fit assassiner par ses partisans en l'an 625/1227/28 Ibn Maṣhīsh,⁹ maître de tous les saints.¹⁰ Plus vigilant, Abū Madyan, entouré de vénération à Bējaya où il décida de se consacrer à l'enseignement et à la piété, quand tout à coup, son énorme popularité porta ombrage à l'émir Almohade, Ya°qūb al-Manṣūr. Intrigué par son audience auprès des "masses" bougiotes, l'émir le convoqua sous prétexte de le consulter sur quelques questions religieuses. Redoutant cette entrevue, Abū Madyan quitta la ville pour Tlemcen; à la vue du *ribāt* d'al-'ubbād (les adorateurs), il s'écria prophétiquement: '*oh! que ce lieu est propice au sommeil!*' Il y mourra juste après, selon la tradition, et y fut d'ailleurs enterré.¹¹

Les marabouts étaient des hommes sanctifiés détenteurs d'une force à la fois réelle et supranaturelle; c'est à leur militantisme que l'on s'adressait pour se débarrasser des tyrannies. L'influence des marabouts du Rif était si grande sur les masses berbères qu'ils s'opposèrent ouvertement au second souverain mérinide de Fès, Yūsuf b. Ya°qūb (685-706/1286-1307); celui-ci fut obligé de prendre des mesures pour éviter le soulèvement des masses exaltées par leurs maîtres spirituels contre son pouvoir.¹²

Les éléments mystiques les plus influents et les plus "encadrants" spirituellement étaient souvent traqués et poursuivis partout où ils étaient. En 713/1313, le sultan Ḥafṣide de Tunis fit une marche armée contre Ṭulga dans le Sud de l'Algérie actuelle "pour mettre au respect" (*li-ta'dhīb*) un des disciples de °Abd al-Raḥmān al-Tāsūlī et faire cesser ses prêches enflammés.¹³

L'affaiblissement de l'autorité sultanienne Ziyānide et la défaillance des pouvoirs publics, à partir notamment de la moitié du quinzième siècle, obligeaient les émirs dont la popularité commençait à être affectée par la présence de disciples et de descendants de saints autour des zawias, à recourir à la répression.

Les tribus maraboutiques, qui devaient se multiplier à l'époque

⁹ L'assassinat du cheikh, notait Abū Rās, fut la cause de la *hijra* du voyage que fit, en Orient, son disciple Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī où il fonda la Shādhiliyya; cf. 'Ajā'ib al-akhbār wa-laṭā'if al-asfār, *Revue africaine* xxv (1881) 374.

¹⁰ Il fut en quelque sorte le troisième maillon de la *silsila* au Maghreb.

¹¹ Cf. Abū'l-°Abbas al-Ghubrīnī, 'Unwān al-dirāya fī awliyā' Bījāya (Alger 1981) 60.

¹² Cf. Alfred Bel, 'Le soufisme dans l'occident musulman', *Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales* (Alger 1934-35) 158.

¹³ Auguste Cour, *L'établissement des dynasties des chérifs au Maroc* (Paris 1904) 11.

ottomane, firent alors lentement leur apparition au courant du quatorzième siècle. Les princes avaient souvent intérêt à se concilier les ulama influents et à reconnaître avec déférence leurs mérites. C'est par l'ascendant moral des *fuqahā'* que le sultan voulait imposer sa légitimité et préserver son pouvoir. L'autorité de ce dernier s'étale sur la légitimité religieuse représentée par les ulama objets de sa politique; quant à celle du saint, elle repose sur l'autorité de son zèle et de ses influences très spirituelles lesquelles dissimulent parfois des intérêts mondains. Abū'l-^cAbbās Aḥmad b. Yūsuf al-Rāshidī, un des plus grands soufis et saint (*walī*) reconnu, qui naquit à la Qal'ā des Banū Rāshid vers 1450, s'était un jour rendu à Oran. Le caïd jaloux de l'accueil que lui réservèrent les populations locales, écrivit aussitôt au prince ziyanide: 'Il existe chez les Ḥuwwāra un homme se prétendant saint, très dangereux pour votre règne'. 'Envoyez-le moi ou tuez-le', répondit l'Emir.¹⁴ Cet ordre hargneux et brutal montre bien l'ampleur de la crainte et de la haine que nourrissaient les princes Ziyānides envers les saints surtout lorsqu'ils jouissaient de popularité. Aḥmad b. Yūsuf illustre la période de transition et de lutte pour le pouvoir entre mystiques et princes; il incarnait comme tant d'autres mystiques, tels Aḥmad b. al-Qādī de Kabylie et Aḥmad al-Kabīr de Blida, le soulèvement des autochtones contre les abus du pouvoir ziyanide. Le relâchement religieux de la dynastie régnante des Banū Ziyān et le danger chrétien qui ne cessait de grandir, poussèrent Aḥmad à jouer un rôle éminent dans l'opposition anti-monarchique. Son influence et ses succès parmi la population d'Oran excita la jalousie de l'Emir Ziyānide ^cAbd Allāh Muḥammad surnommé al-Mutawakkil ^calā'llāh (866-880/1462-1475), qui le persécuta avant de le condamner à mort. Mais Aḥmad b. Yūsuf, selon la légende, dut échapper miraculeusement au bûcher d'Abū Ḥammū II, émir de Tlemcen et s'enfuit à Rās al-Mā', auprès du caïd des Banū Rāshid, ^cAlī b. Abī Ghānim. A l'arrivée des ordres de l'Emir Ziyānide, Aḥmad s'éloigna en maudissant ses persécuteurs.¹⁵ Le prince Ḥafṣide de Bougie, hostile aux Banū Ziyān offrit au saint marabout un asile sûr.¹⁶ Bien qu'il eût attendu la mort du prince Abū ^cAbd Allāh pour revenir à Banū Rāshid, Aḥmad b. Yūsuf ne retrouva pas la sûreté ni la sérénité

¹⁴ Abū Rās al-Nāṣirī, *'Ajā'ib al-akhbār wa-laṭā'if al-asfār*, *Revue africaine* xxiv (1880) 139 sq.

¹⁵ Ibn Maryam al-Mallīṭī, *al-Bustān fī awliyā' Tilimsān* (Alger 1978) 287.

¹⁶ Cf. René Basset, 'Les dictons satiriques attribués à S. Ahmad b. Youssef', *Journal asiatique* ix (1890) 1-47.

dans l'Oranais, il fut de nouveau en butte aux exactions et aux poursuites du sultan Abū Ḥammū III. Celui-ci envoya son bourreau pour l'exécuter dans sa prison, mais le cheikh, selon la tradition, devint invisible.¹⁷

L'opposition acharnée de la monarchie Ziyānide au saint Muḥammad al-Ḥuwwārī, concrétisée par le meurtre de son fils commis par les Banū Ziyān, serait à l'origine de la prise d'Oran par les Espagnols en 1505, demandée par al-Ḥuwwārī, comme le note une tradition crédule. Un des disciples du cheikh n'a pas manqué de mettre en garde les Banū Ziyān dans une *qaṣīda* rimée sur la *tā'*.¹⁸

Au commencement du seizième siècle, les querelles et l'opposition des monarchies Ziyānides aux mystiques, aboutissent à l'intervention espagnole (1505). Les dissensions entre saints marabouts et sultans contribuèrent dans une large mesure à l'affaiblissement de la dynastie régnante et devinrent un des facteurs principaux qui permirent l'instauration d'un pouvoir ottoman en Algérie. Saints et marabouts lassés des persécutions et des bannissements des princes Ziyānides, alarmés par les menaces du danger chrétien, finirent par appeler à leur secours les Barberousse, champions à ce moment là du *jihād* en Méditerranée: 'Nul doute que l'action de la mystique au Maghreb septentrional n'ait contribué, par le détachement des choses terrestres, répandu dans les esprits, à la réussite si surprenante des Turcs'.¹⁹

La première période, dite des Beylerbeys, couvrant le seizième siècle, marquée par la coalition turco-maraboutique, avait pour point de départ le soutien qu'avaient apporté les principaux saints et fiefs maraboutiques dans le processus de l'instauration du pouvoir ottoman. L'opposition des dirigeants ottomans à la mystique, au début, n'était en fait qu'une réaction contre les éléments hostiles à leur établissement et ne concernait que les anciennes lignées, sujets des Ziyānides, qui ne reconnaissaient pas la légitimité de leur *khilāfa* sur l'Algérie.

C'est surtout lorsque les intentions et les visées politiques turques se concrétisaient par la fondation du premier *pashalik*, en Afrique du Nord, que les controverses et les fatwas désapprouvantes de chefs mystiques, commençaient à devenir très nombreuses. Divisés en plusieurs attitudes, les opposants mystiques peuvent être

¹⁷ Ibid. 19-20.

¹⁸ Abū Rās, op.cit. 139.

¹⁹ Cf. Ernest Mercier, *Histoire de L'Afrique Septentrionale* (Alger 1879) 14.

essentiellement classés en trois catégories: ceux qui doutaient de la foi des Barberousse; ceux qui craignaient des représailles pour n'avoir pas apporté leur contribution dans leurs opérations de reconquête; et ceux qui se rattachant par principe à la foi, récusaient le pouvoir des Turcs qu'ils considéraient comme des *'ajam*, des étrangers. Entre autres nombreux opposants, un marabout proclamant une fatwa parmi ses fidèles dans le Sud, disait que 'Celui qui tuait un Turc, avait autant de mérite pour Dieu, que celui qui tuait un renégat'.²⁰ Ibn al-Maghūfal, un marabout descendant de Ibn Mashīsh disait également que 'les sultans turcs, *al-'ajam* ... en apparence pratiquaient le *jihād*, mais en réalité ils ne faisaient que guetter avec leurs intentions malignes les *bilād al-islām*' (faisant allusion à Alger).²¹ Bābā °Arūj réagit brutalement à cette fatwa et fit prisonnier les deux fils du marabout en question, lors de sa campagne sur Tlemcen. Entre autres réactions hostiles, Aḥmad b. Mulūka al-Nadhrūmī (de Nadhrouma), mis au courant par les fuyards des montagnes de Snāssen (environs de Tlemcen) des massacres perpétrés par Bābā °Arūj à Tlemcen, s'écria, pris de colère: 'O Dieu, qu'il ne revienne jamais à Tlemcen!' (faisant allusion à Bābā °Arūj), nous comptons sur toi, tu es le plus puissant!'²² La légende croit que Dieu a exaucé l'invocation du cheikh puisque Bābā °Arūj fut assassiné, et ne retourna plus jamais à Tlemcen. Certains autres marabouts, extrêmement hostiles aux Turcs, les qualifiaient de *'ajam* en les plaçant parfois au même pied d'égalité avec les chrétiens, tel Muḥammad al-Sanūsī, fondateur de l'illustre confrérie Sanūsiyya. Celui-ci pense que rien n'est plus illicite que de vivre au contact du chrétien et de subir *la domination des Turcs* (sic). Il récusait catégoriquement leur présence, d'ailleurs, il ne cessait de répéter: *al-Turk wa'l-naṣārā al-kull fī zamra naqṭa'uhum fī marra* (les Turcs et les Chrétiens, je les classe tous dans la même catégorie, je les taillerai en pièces tous en même temps).²³

Beaucoup de ces opposants se virent bannis et poursuivis par les janissaires. Alors que certains marabouts, fuyant leurs persécuteurs, parvinrent à se réfugier dans les confins de l'extrême Sud, d'autres regagnèrent les foyers mystiques au Maroc pour se recycler ou pour

²⁰ Charles Féraud, 'Les b. Djellab seigneurs de Touggourt', *Revue africaine* xxiii (1879) 270.

²¹ *al-Urjūza*, cité par Abū'l-Qāsim Sa'd Allāh, *al-Ta'rīkh al-thaqāfī* (Alger 1982) 477.

²² Ibn Maryam, *op. cit.* 146

²³ Charles Féraud, 'Les b. Djellab', *Revue africaine* xxv (1881) 123.

y enseigner; pendant que d'autres se vouèrent à la *hijra* (émigration de la foi), partirent à la Mecque pour vivre dans le recueillement et la sérénité. Abū °Uthmān al-Sa°id al-Tilimsānī, avant de fuir le pays, composa un poème intitulé *al-°Aqd*, où il traita *Les Turcs de sauvages barbares*.²⁴

L'opposition entre saints et beys était souvent motivée par les luttes pour le pouvoir. Le cas du cheikh Ibn al-Qāḍī, illustre bien cette lutte. L'un des plus anciens alliés des Turcs, il finit par se détacher de cette coalition dès que Khayr ad-Dīn Barberousse se mit sous la suzeraineté de la Porte, et lutta victorieusement pour préserver l'autonomie de sa confédération maraboutique de Kūkū. Selon la légende, il aurait été tué en 1527 au sein même de son fief à Kūkū, par le marabout Kabyle Sīdī Maṣṣūr,²⁵ apparemment de connivence avec les Turcs. Méfiants, les beys s'adonnèrent alors à un "nettoyage" politique et décidèrent de liquider les personnages anciennement ancrés dans le terroir et les plus influents. Les Awlād °Abd al-Mu°min, de la grande famille savante d'origine maraboutique, étaient également en lutte pour préserver la domination sur la ville de Constantine que leur dynastie exerçait depuis l'ère des Almohades (1139-1267). Ils se montraient si inlassablement hostiles à l'installation turque qu'ils furent victimes de leur résistance et de leur courage. Ṣāliḥ al-°Antarī, affirme que suite à leur attitude, Khayr ad-Dīn fit massacrer vingt quatre personnes parmi eux.²⁶

A vrai dire, les marabouts ayant accueilli favorablement l'établissement turc se faisaient plus nombreux pour deux raisons. La première se rattache vraisemblablement aux principes de la foi: ils considéraient les Turcs, contrairement aux opposants, comme des coreligionnaires dignes de la *khilāfa*. La deuxième relève de considérations personnelles: les plus influents furent comblés de présents et de promesses avant même la fondation de la Régence. C'est sur cette catégorie de mystiques, que les Turcs vont élaborer une sorte de politique d'endiguement visant à annihiler ceux qui leur étaient hostiles et à gratifier leurs vassaux. Ce type de réactions approuvées, qui enchantèrent les Turcs, marqua les rapports entre les janissaires et cette catégorie de religieux qui jouissait, dès l'abord

²⁴ Ibn Ṣaḥnūn al-Rāshidī, *al-Thaḡhr al-jumānī fī b'tisām al-thaḡhr al-wahrānī* (Alger 1981) 56.

²⁵ Amar Boulifa, *Le Djurdjura à travers l'Histoire* (Alger 1878) 266.

²⁶ Ṣalāḥ al-°Antarī, *al-Farīda al-mu'nisa* (ms dans la collection personnelle de l'auteur, s.d.) 39.

et pendant toute l'époque ottomane, de gratifications et de faveurs. Cette attitude devint par la suite "une politique religieuse" largement pratiquée par les pachas.

L'opposition saint-bey était à plus d'un titre objective puisqu'elle s'opérait entre deux élites d'origins différentes. Par sa personnalité quasi-surhumaine, par son détachement de la vie profane, par son austérité, le saint atteignait les couches populaires. En dehors du cercle de ses adeptes, au sens réduit du terme, tout un peuple d'admirateurs et de sympathisants gravitait autour de lui. On recourait à lui dans tous les moments faciles et difficiles de la vie: dans l'adversité, dans le malheur comme dans le bonheur. Il peut porter secours à distance, il est lui-même secours (*al-ghawth*) et l'assurance contre l'iniquité du bey et même contre les caprices de la nature. Par sa popularité et son rôle d'intermédiaire entre le créé et le créateur par sa foi militante, il arrive à recruter des adeptes dans les classes sociales les plus variées. Il incarne aux yeux de l'élite des masses la foi militante et représente des valeurs à la fois subjectives et concrètes. C'est là que le saint porte ombrage au bey et devient un concurrent très menaçant pour le pouvoir. Celui-ci, contrairement au saint, menant une vie vaine et agitée, fait figure de profanateur et de tyran. L'entourage immédiat du bey est composé de '*ulamā*' *al-ẓāhir* et de *quḍāt*. Le bey en tant que souverain accapareur de la force, protège le '*ālim* qu'il a investi; ainsi, l'un et l'autre s'opposent à tout pouvoir se réclamant d'une légitimité nuisible, religieuse ou autre. De par son charisme et son audience sur les esprits des masses, le saint apparaît aux yeux des officiels du pouvoir et de la religion comme un éventuel concurrent intrigant. C'est dans cette "trilogie" politique, spirituelle et canonique que se situent les luttes et les conflits. Le saint, manquant de puissance matérielle, force concrète, agit d'une manière nuancée par la magie (*siḥr*) et les miracles (*karāmāt*). Le bey évitant de provoquer "les foudres" du saint homme qui assure les rapports entre le social et le divin, utilise souvent des religieux compromis avec son pouvoir pour faire échouer toute prétention politique des éléments mystiques. Enfin, une lutte s'inscrit dans le cadre d'un conflit de coterie et peut déborder les clans et s'interposer dans une même élite quand les intérêts se chevauchent et se superposent.

Des luttes plus ou moins douces et subtiles étaient secrètement engagées entre mystiques et pachas, notamment à partir du dix-septième siècle, époque de la prépondérance du sacré. Les marabouts, en l'occurrence ruraux, ne manifestaient pas seulement leur puissance par des symboles compatibles aux faits mystiques,

mais beaucoup d'entre eux trouvèrent salut et grâce à la faveur de leurs *karāmāt*.

Les réactions charismatiques, comme mode de résistance et d'opposition, étaient souvent liées aux conflits et aux phénomènes de crises. Celles-ci posaient d'une manière voilée la question du pouvoir et les différents aspects de sa légitimité. Les moyens de défense des saints thaumaturges dépendaient fondamentalement de leur fiabilité et de la crédibilité de leur charisme. Force réelle ou charismatique, comme toujours, la légende acclame plutôt la force superstitieuse et irrationnelle à laquelle elle attribue la véritable cause de la puissance mystique. Entre plusieurs autres exemples, le refus de la tribu maraboutique des Awlād Sīdī Khālīd au Sud de Constantine, de payer la *lazma* (impôt annuel), en 1638, suscita l'intervention de Murād Bey de Constantine qui mena une razzia contre elle.²⁷ En guise de renfort, il reçut une colonne de l'*ocak* et fit marche sur la tribu rebelle.²⁸ Confrontés à la puissance réelle des Awlād Sīdī Khālīd, en armes et en hommes, la campagne alla à l'échec. Cet échec était objectif, mais il fut tout de même attribué au charisme de Sīdī Khālīd: la vie sauve ne fut accordée aux i que sous des conditions révélatrices de cette extraordinaire croyance en la puissance supranaturelle:²⁹ les janissaires devaient repartir droit sur Alger sans se retourner ni à droite ni à gauche, 'sous peine d'être tous taillés en pièces'.

La subtilité et l'audace politiques s'opposent parfois au charisme mystique. Certains Beys téméraires, moins dupes, ne manquaient pas de prendre le risque d'affronter le charisme mystique: après que sa caravane, qui se rendait à Umm al-malāzīm dans le Tell, eut été pillée par les partisans de Ja'far Bey de Titteri, Sīdī Muḥammad b. al-Aṭraṣh, marabout des Awlād 'Ā'īsa, alla se plaindre auprès du Bey; avec impertinence et audace, celui-ci lui répondit: 'Je suis chameau et le marabout la plante épineuse; mais le chameau mange la plante épineuse' (*rānī jmal wa'lamrābat chūk wa'l-jmal ya'kul al-chūk*).³⁰

Les inspirations charismatiques comme moyen de lutte, n'étaient

²⁷ Le Père Dan (rédempteur de l'Ordre de la Trinité), 'Histoire générale de la vie, des faits et des aventures des notables pris par les infidèles', *Revue asiatique* xx (1884) 56.

²⁸ Le refus de payer l'impôt était une manière implicite de désobéissance et refus de pouvoir.

²⁹ Dan, op. cit. 213.

³⁰ Adréan Berbrugger, 'Notice sur l'administration du beylik de Titteri', *Revue africaine* ix (1865) 294.

pas uniquement dressées contre le pouvoir officiel, elles étaient aussi utilisées dans les compétitions qui opposaient les différents fiefs maraboutiques et les composantes mystiques. ³¹ *ʿĀʿisa b. Muḥammad des Awlād Ṭalba* était un des marabouts les plus célèbres des territoires de Mostaghanem. Un jour il reçut la visite du seigneur de la Medjana, Aḥmad al-Muqrānī, qui avec des arrière-pensées d'héritage et de règne, invoqua une commune ascendance ancestrale. Sīdī *ʿĀʿisa* touché par ces intentions malveillantes, l'expulsa en récusant formellement toute parenté avec lui. Al-Muqrānī furieux, partit en hâte, rassembla une armée de deux mille guerriers de la Kabylie et revint pour le châtier, mais Sīdī *ʿĀʿisa* plus puissant en dons charismatiques, 'paralisa son armée et métamorphosa al-Muqrānī en femme'.³²

Etant une preuve de puissance supranaturelle, les *karāmāt* furent aussi instrument fiable de pouvoir, de justice, et de concurrence de prestige entre saints-marabouts et saints-soufis. Elles étaient donc un moyen sûr de rehausser ou d'abaisser l'honneur, l'influence et la crédibilité des uns ou des autres. Enfin, les réactions supranaturelles étaient souvent un moyen d'opposition et de défense, notamment pour les marabouts ruraux. Ces manifestations mystiques, phénomène très à la mode à cette époque, ne manquaient pas d'attirer la curiosité des voyageurs occidentaux: en visite à Alger en 1725, Laugier de Tassy (commissaire de la marine pour sa Majesté le Roi de Hollande)³³ relata l'histoire d'un duel charismatique entre Sīdī *ʿĪsū*s et le saint rigoriste plus ou moins soufi Sīdī Sinnā. Voulant tirer prestige et autorité de l'échec de l'expédition de Charles Quint sur Alger, en 1541, chacun des deux saints prétendait être à l'origine du massacre de la flotte chrétienne. L'affaire fut même portée devant le Diwan du pacha Ḥassān (1533-1545) pour trancher et élire celui qui fut le véritable saint protecteur d'Alger.

L'autre modalité d'opposition et de lutte, en l'occurrence entre saints plus ou moins rigoristes et *ʿālim*, consiste en polémiques finissant en véritables guerres verbales. Pour l'époque en question, dans les centres urbains où pullulaient *madrasas* et centres d'initiations mystiques, c'est surtout à partir de la moitié du dix-septième siècle³⁴ que les *fuqahāʿ* livrèrent bataille à l'ésotérisme qui

³¹ Ils furent appelés ainsi en raison du grand nombre d'étudiants qui venaient solliciter chaque année l'enseignement du père de Sīdī Maḥammad et de lui-même.

³² al-*ʿAdwānī*, *Kitāb aʿyān al-maghāriba* (Tunis 1863) 142.

³³ *Histoire du Royaume d'Alger*, éd. H. Sauzet (Amsterdam 1725) 46-48.

³⁴ C'est avec la pacification, la stabilisation institutionnelle et l'enracinement du

avait tendance à éclipser leur pouvoir dans la *eyalet* (régence).

Les débats d'une manière traditionnelle étaient une guerre de principes entre deux groupes antagonistes d'une part: les tenants de la religion "officielle", qui n'adhèrent pas aux préceptes mystiques, et condamnent tout esprit de "superstition", toute interprétation ésotérique du Coran, tout caractère d'indocilité, de séduction et de révolte, tout esprit "d'irréligion" et de scandale; d'autre part la mystique qui blâme l'esprit d'attachement à l'autorité du souverain, prêche la soumission à Dieu, le service au *jihād* et l'esprit de zèle pour les intérêts de la religion. En fait, l'esprit de corps de certaines lignées maraboutiques et de congrégation de certains *majālis*, tel le majlis de Muhammad al-Būnī de Būna (Annāba) très stigmatisé à cette époque, apparaissait comme un esprit de faction prêt à diviser la *umma*, un esprit de chiisme nuisant aux préceptes de la loi coranique, un esprit d'indépendance prêt à troubler les intérêts beylicaux.

Cependant les plus rigoristes parmi les mystiques, s'attaquaient particulièrement à ce qu'ils appelaient les mondains et les "hypocrites" (*al-munāfiqūn*). A leurs yeux, les premiers nuisent à l'ascétisme par leurs médisances et leur comportement frivole, les seconds le dénaturent et le ridiculisent par leur comportement contraire à la loi coranique. Les meilleurs exemples de polémiques se trouvent dans le *Manshūr* satirique du *shaykh al-islām* du beylik de Constantine. °Abd al-Karīm Lafgūn (1580-1662), le marabout citadin, le *shaykh al-islām* de Constantine, sujet de la politique des beys, se dressa contre la mystique de son époque.³⁵ Il critiqua durement les marabouts et les pseudo-fakirs, qu'il traita avec fureur de *dujjāl* (imposteurs) et de *mubtadi'ūn* (innovateurs). Il écrivit en exclusivité, à l'époque de Murād Bey (1622-1647), son livre *Manshūr al-hidāya*, unique dans son genre par son caractère froid et sa critique pertinente. La troisième partie de ce *Manshūr*, intitulée *Les prétendants à la sainteté et les faussaires* classe les innovateurs de son époque en trois principales catégories: *al-dajjālūn* (quelque chose comme faussaires), *al-dāllūn* (les ignorants égarés) et les

pouvoir, à l'époque des pachas (1585-1689), que "la guerre des influences" exacerbée, devenait plus courante.

³⁵ Devant la prépondérance de l'ésotérisme, certains *faqīhs* compromis avec le pouvoir, sous une forme d'absorption de noyautage ou de récupération, d'autres pour un but de renforcement de prestige par l'habit saint, adhèrent à la mystique pour lui porter des coups de l'intérieur. Nous pensons que °Abd al-Karīm dont la lignée héritait de la *riyāsa* et de la *khiāba* à la grande mosquée depuis déjà trois générations, en était un.

charlatans brigands (*man idda‘ā al-wilāya fi’l-istilā‘ alā arzāq al-nās*). Parmi ces *dajjāl*, Muhammad al-Ghurāb qui, dit-il, en allant se plaindre au *faqīh* Sīdī ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, après avoir été chahuté par ses élèves, le traita par le verset coranique 83/18, de Shayṭān.³⁶ ‘Alī al-‘Ābid, l’illustre adepte de la Shābbiyya³⁷ “qui avait une grande renommée entre Constantine et Bilād al-‘Anāb” (le pays du jujubier: Annaba), n’échappera pas aussi aux qualifications de *mubtadi‘* et de *zindiq*.³⁸

La plus dangereuse catégorie selon le *Manshūr*, était celle des brigands et des voleurs. Il notait que certains saints faussaires (*dajjālūn*) utilisaient leurs dons charismatiques pour tromper et voler les biens qui ne leurs appartenaient pas. Le plus visé dans cette catégorie de saints brigands était Qāsim b. Umm Hānī³, un saint charlatan, très impliqué dans la magie. Lorsqu’il apprenait que quelqu’un venait d’acquérir un bien, il envoyait ses agents pour faire main basse sur la chose. Les gens crédules et superstitieux, obéissaient généralement et cédaient aux menaces charismatiques même s’il s’agissait de leurs biens les plus précieux; et s’ils résistaient et ne cédaient pas au chantage, ce qui était pour l’auteur une chose vraiment rare, le saint leur promettait le mauvais sort; et le premier malheur qui touchait la personne ou son entourage était interprété comme la malédiction promise. Toutefois, la clientèle et les amis du cheikh ne manquaient pas de s’occuper de la propagande qui nourrissait des buts malsains. Si aucun malheur ne coïncidait avec l’événement dans un temps donné, le prétendu saint envoyait ses complices pour s’emparer du bien visé en faisant croire la victime à un fait extraordinaire provoqué par le mécontentement du saint.³⁹

Les polémiques et les controverses souvent perpétuées par des échanges d’accusations, n’épargnaient presque personne. Il serait même difficile de reconnaître le saint orthodoxe du saint factice. La liste des prétendus saints et des faussaires innovateurs (*ad‘iyā‘ al-wilāya wa’l-dajjālūn*) dans le *Manshūr* est longue mais les reproches et les détails étaient-ils vrais ou calomnieux? En tous les cas, aucune réplique ni démenti n’a jamais répondu à ces accusations, exceptée la

³⁶ ‘Abd al-Karīm Lafgūn, *Manshūr al-hidāya* 118. Ms aimablement communiqué par Ḥasūna Lafgūn.

³⁷ Confrérie religieuse qui avait de forts succès à la fin du seizième et au début du dix-septième siècles; elle s’affirma brillamment sur la scène politique, notamment en Tunisie.

³⁸ *Manshūr* 168.

³⁹ *Manshūr* 123-127.

modeste réplique du Sheikh al-Būnī, qui dans une *qaṣīda*, rappela sagement que le *shaykh al-islām* Lafgūn ne devait pas s'abaisser à de tels traitements, et 'qu'il était grave, pour Dieu, de blesser l'honneur des gens, en les accusant à tort et à travers, sans fondement'.⁴⁰ Cependant, toutes les polémiques ne sauraient dissimuler une lutte réellement politique. Le poème satirique qui suit, est fort révélateur: il commence par des accusations virulentes relatives aux principes, et finit par la contestation des fonctions religieuses de certains mystiques qualifiés d'hérétiques:

L'époque trébuche par sa génération.

Les barques de sauvetage se brisèrent sur les vagues de l'hérésie.

Les nuages de l'ignorance faisaient ombre et les marchés de la science devenaient méventes.

L'ignorant devint président, et le savant dans sa maison se traitait d'ignoble.

Les voix mystiques qui tombèrent entre les mains de l'hérésie prit le dessus de l'orthodoxie.

Les odeurs des négations et les expulsions se faisaient de plus en plus sentir (dans la vie).

Les deux clans (mystiques) se sont attachés à la mondanité et prirent les postes qui revenaient légitimement et anciennement aux orthodoxes.⁴¹

La virulence des injures s'aligne sur une certaine subtilité beylicale et ne réussit pas à cacher la faiblesse de la dialectique souvent teintée de mondanité profane. Les accusations étaient souvent dénuées d'argumentations et de preuves.

Les affrontements qui en apparence étaient une bataille secrète entre ésotérique et exotérique, s'avéraient au fond des péripéties politiques marquées par des luttes entre ceux qui étaient impliqués avec le pouvoir et ceux qui lui étaient hostiles. La lutte pour l'autorité fut la principale composante des relations entre *faqīr* et *ʿālim* d'une part, et entre *faqīr* et pouvoir de l'autre. Les questions d'orthodoxie, d'hérésie et de moralité attisaient les débats et les polémiques même les plus politiques. Les fatwas qui remplissaient le discours politique servaient désormais de prétexte pour toutes les ambitions inavouées des différents clans.

Les discours religieux et les controverses qui pouvaient être analysés comme une prise de conscience politique, étaient aussi un moyen habile de compétition pour la *riyāsa* (prééminence)⁴² entre les différents protagonistes parmi les lignées religieuses. C'était aussi, d'une manière générale, une arme de lutte pour les fonctions

⁴⁰ Cf. Tawfīq al-Madānī et Naṣr ad-Dīn aṣ-Ṣaydūnī, *al-ʿAhd al-ʿuthmānī* (Alger 1984) 164.

⁴¹ *Manshūr* 31, 32.

⁴² La *riyāsa* ne s'obtenait que par des moyens de débats religieux subtiles et de polémiques, rarement par des moyens thaumaturges.

disputées entre ceux qui n'avaient pas le pouvoir et ceux qui en avaient.

Les polémiques et les accusations mutuelles ne se limitaient pas aux saints locaux, elles suivaient toujours les intérêts conditionnés par les rapports de force et pouvaient même déborder les frontières territoriales. Parmi les grandes polémiques qui ont marqué l'histoire de la mystique maghrébine, figure celle qui opposa Sīdī Shaykh au saint marocain Abū Maḥallī. Les visées expansionnistes des deux adversaires, notamment celles d'Abū Maḥallī, envieux de la renommée de Sīdī Shaykh, étaient très grandes. Dans son *Manjanīq*,⁴³ il le stigmatisa d'une manière virulente en le traitant d'hérétique. Sīdī Shaykh répliqua sagement dans sa fameuse *qaṣīda*, *al-Yāqūta*⁴⁴ où il rappela ses expériences mystiques, les vrais préceptes de la foi et les tristes sorts réservés à ses détracteurs.

Par l'opposition entre les intérêts des saints et des ulama, le pouvoir essayait de conserver une sorte d'équilibre entre les clans en ayant recours à la compromission, ce qui lui assura une homogénéité politique. Le poste de *qāḍī* Ḥanafī des Turcs était mis en compétition entre les "barons" de la mystique orthodoxe, Sīdī °Abd al-Laṭīf b. Barakāt (mort en 1031/1622), et Sīdī Bal °Abbās. Cette dispute pour la *riyāsa*, fit des deux amis d'enfance, des ennemis acharnés. Enfin, ce fut Sīdī °Abd al-Laṭīf, le plus populaire, le plus fort en charisme qui fut élu *qāḍī* des Turcs.⁴⁵

L'administration beylicale eut souvent tendance à exploiter les fatwas pour des motifs purement politiques, notamment pour endiguer les influences des différents clans religieux et contrôler les menaces grandissantes de la mystique. Elles servaient surtout à inculper les plus hostiles parmi les *shuyūkh*, à bannir les indésirables fastidieux et à neutraliser les plus influents parmi l'élément religieux. Les consultations canoniques recelaient souvent des intentions impures. Le *ḥalāl*, le *ḥarām* et la *bid'a*, devinrent ainsi des outils politiques de compétition et de lutte, pour les différents détracteurs parmi lesquels bon nombre de prétendus marabouts citadins et ulama se disputaient *ad vitam* les bénéfices de la puissance politique. Pour créer une atmosphère d'extorsion et de neutralisation, les beys allaient jusqu'à impliquer les plus influents

⁴³ Cf. *Manjanīq al-ṣukhūr li-hadm shaykh al-ghurūr* (Bibliothèque Royale Rabat ms 338).

⁴⁴ La *Yāqūta* est toujours chantée dans la *zāwiya* à Sīdī Shaykh al-Biodh, lors de la prière du vendredi et après la prière qui suit les funérailles (*ṣalāt al-ghā'ib*).

⁴⁵ Cf. *Manshūr* 78-9.

parmi les santons dans la corruption en les intégrant dans les affaires cléricales. Les Umm Hānī³, lignée maraboutique constantinoise, très influente dans le milieu populaire, tout en se soumettant activement au service de la propagande des Turcs en proclamant au moment opportun des fatwas en faveur du système,⁴⁶ profitaient en contre partie de leur libre mouvement et de leurs manœuvres souvent douteuses.

Jouissant d'une bonne renommée dans les milieux orthodoxes, Sīdī Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Gharbī, dit Abū'l-Faḍl, contemporain de Qāsim Lafgūn (oncle de °Abd al-Karīm), fut sévèrement stigmatisé par des religieux, agents du pouvoir. Inculpé d'hérésie, il fut condamné par Ja°far Bey (1574/88). Quand certains ulama prirent sa défense et crièrent son innocence, l'administration du *beylik* fit de lui un fou dangereux et l'enferma en prison.⁴⁷ D'autres mystiques, victimes des polémiques de certains sujets du pouvoir, se faisaient emprisonner ou expulser par le caïd turc: les bannissements ottomans étaient nombreux et jalonnaient les chroniques de l'époque. Al-Warṭhilānī⁴⁸ notait qu'il rencontra, en 1732, aux environs de Gabès (en Tunisie), le Shaykh Abū °Azīz al-Ḥannāshī fuyant l'armée du bey qui l'accusait de sortir de la voie de la sharia. Les mystiques ne furent pas les seuls à souffrir de ces manœuvres démagogiques et de la ségrégation turque, bon nombre de fonctionnaires autochtones furent évincés pour leurs positions controversées aux intérêts de l'administration beylicale; à titre d'exemple, Sīdī Ḥamza b. Ḥasan (mort en 1050/1641) *qāḍī sunnī* connu par son hostilité à la justice beylicale, fut inculpé de corruption.⁴⁹

Les fatwas étaient souvent un moyen de censure et de prétexte pour la condamnation des partis rivaux parmi les saints qui commençaient à lui faire de l'ombrage sur la scène politique. Cette méthode était d'autant plus efficace qu'elle empêchait souvent la mobilisation des éléments les plus rivaux au pouvoir.

L'opposition beylicale au flux mystique, très favorisée par la nouvelle conjoncture de crise qui frappa l'Algérie au dix-huitième siècle, était d'autant plus rude que les époques précédentes qu'elle finit par la répression. Pachas et beys observant leur autorité se plier sous l'ombre imprégnant de la mystique, mettaient tout en œuvre

46 Sur les comportements hétérodoxes et les mauvaises mœurs cf. *ibid.* 120-4.

47 *Manshūr* 56.

48 Al-Ḥusayn al-Warṭhilānī, *Nuzhat al-anẓār fī faḍl 'ilm al-ta'rikh wa'l-akhbār* (Alger 1908) 126.

49 *Manshūr* 75.

pour enrayer le mouvement mystique et s'opposer à ses éléments les plus hostiles.

Très inquiets de l'usure de leur système face à l'épanouissement des ordres expansifs⁵⁰ en l'occurrence des *khwān*,⁵¹ les beys s'adonnèrent à une authentique politique d'affrontement. Ṣāliḥ Bey (1771-1792) originaire de Smyrne, conscient de la situation minée de parallélisme politique, fut le véritable pionnier des réformes dans le beylik de Constantine, où le mysticisme connut une réelle floraison. Il privilégia le processus d'une réislamisation, favorisant l'orthodoxie au détriment des *khwān* les plus néfastes et les plus opposants. Il décréta des mesures palliatives et fit de la mosquée le fer de lance de ses réformes inspirées pour combattre l'avance de la *zāwiya* comme centre de rayonnement et de propagation des préceptes dogmatiques de la mystique confrérique.⁵² Les mosquées de la ville de Constantine furent en grande partie construites ou rénovées vers la fin du dix-huitième siècle, en pleine période de décomposition du système turc: Ṣāliḥ Bey, en réformateur opiniâtre, entraîna les pachas à faire de la concurrence de la mosquée une sorte de courroie de transmission du système. Il s'adonnait sans relâche à construire et à entretenir les *jawāmi*^c (lieu de prosternation et d'enseignement) et les *masājid* (lieu de prière uniquement), et édifia en premier les *jawāmi*^c de Sidī al-Akhḍar et de Sidī al-Kattānī. Obstinément bienveillant au bon fonctionnement de la grande mosquée, il la dota d'un énorme apanage religieux et confia sa gestion à la notoriété et à la grande bienveillance du Sheikh Lafgūn à qui il délivra un diplôme.⁵³

La multiplication des mosquées, à notre sens, s'inscrit comme une réplique tendant, non seulement à faire face physiquement à la *zāwiya*, mais plutôt à essayer de créer de nouveaux centres-relais d'endoctrinement et de propagande pour "un Islam moins rival". Dans ses réformes de l'institution de la *madrasa*, Ṣāliḥ Bey fut aidé par un groupe de *mufṭīs*: Abd al-Qādir al-Rāshidī, *mufṭī* Ḥanafī; Sha^cbān b. Jallūn, *qāḍī* Ḥanafī également, et Lafgūn, *shaykh al-islām*

⁵⁰ La majorité des confréries algériennes, à savoir la Tijāniyya, la Raḥmāniyya et la Darqāwiyya font leur apparition à la deuxième moitié du dix-huitième siècle.

⁵¹ A la différence des adeptes des confréries orientales, les adeptes locaux se font appeler les *khwān*.

⁵² Charles Féraud, 'Les anciens établissements musulmans de Constantine', *Revue africaine* xii (1868) 122-125.

⁵³ Ernest Mercier, 'L'émergence de la famille Lafgūn', *Recueil de la Société Archéologique de Constantine* xix (1878) 226.

entre autres.⁵⁴ L'encadrement était assuré par des *imām* abusivement désignés comme des *ulama*, que les beys comblaient d'égards et d'honneurs.⁵⁵

Malgré toutes les tentatives politiques et physiques, les *zāwīyas* ne cessèrent de lancer leur défi, de réaffirmer encore plus leur organisation et leur propagation. Le pouvoir officiel, ne réussit donc guère l'affaiblissement de la *zāwīya*. Centre de décision, d'autorité spirituelle et politique, elle était d'autant plus obstinée que jamais à poursuivre sa lutte, qu'elle résista mieux aux manœuvres de décadence et d'isolement d'un régime turc, de plus en plus fragile, voire impuissant. A ces réformes s'ajoutaient des mesures d'alourdissement de la fiscalité. Les privilèges fiscaux accordés à certaines lignées marabout-mystiques notamment depuis 1772, furent subitement remis en question. Šālīḥ Bey, pour qui la nouvelle politique avait manifestement d'autres visées, essaya de saper l'autorité des *zāwīyas* les plus proches de la *imāra* (c.à.d. le beylik) dont le danger était particulièrement éminent. L'intouchable shaykhat des *Awlād ʿĀbid* fut dès lors obligée à payer l'impôt⁵⁶ et ʿAbd Allāh al-Zabūshī, le célèbre santan de Mila entre autres, fut affranchi de ses droits d'exemption d'impôts ainsi que de ses privilèges.⁵⁷ L'Etat réticent et ahuri n'arrivait pas à trouver un équilibre pour sa politique qui visait à enrayer à la fois le processus de sa dégradation et éradiquer le phénomène mystique qui semblait jouer le jeu de la concurrence et du défi. Cette dynamique multiforme et ces calculs politiques, propres à cette époque deylicale, étaient de peu de secours; les beys ne faisaient en fait qu'accroître d'une façon spectaculaire la tension entre les tribus et les beylicats et compliquer leurs rapports avec les agents du pouvoir socio-religieux. 'La politique turque fut alors contradictoire, car d'un côté la coopération des chefs locaux était une garantie de paix de bonne rentrée des impôts, mais de l'autre, l'usage de la force poussait ces mêmes chefs à prendre la tête des révoltes populaires pour ne pas se déconsidérer tout à fait aux yeux de leurs clients'.⁵⁸

Quand ces premières mesures n'arrivaient pas à refroidir ni à intimider l'ardeur mystique ni encore à remédier au problème financier, les beys lançaient des *razzias* notamment contre les tribus

54 Mouloud Gaïd, *Chronique des beys d'Alger* (Alger 1982) 41.

55 Féraud, 'Les anciens établissements' 121.

56 'Les *Awlād Sīdī ʿĀbid*', *Archives d'Outre Mer* (Aix-en-Provence) 10, H 12.

57 Féraud, 'Les anciens établissements' 121.

58 Abdallah Laroui, *Histoire du Maghreb, un essai de synthèse* (Paris 1976) ii, 46.

du Sud. Ce n'était que vers la fin de sa carrière politique dans le beylik de Constantine, notait al-^cAntarī, que Ṣālīḥ Bey commençait à paraître de plus en plus haineux et revanchard, envers les *zāwīyas*.⁵⁹ Irrité par les incessants défis de la mystique, ce fut par le marabout Shaykh al-Zawāwī qu'il commença sa politique de répression; il l'assassinat non loin de ses jardins; sa dépouille se transforma, dit la légende, en un corbeau⁶⁰ d'où le surnom de Laghrāb.

Dans toute cette série d'oppositions, oscillant entre les politiques les plus subtiles et la répression la plus sévère, la flamme de la mystique semblait triomphante des dialectiques des beys qui ne trouvaient pas de moyens pour éradiquer le mouvement ni même un terrain d'entente dans leur politique. Victime de sa politique religieuse et son opposition acharnée contre les marabouts, Ṣālīḥ Bey connut en 1792 une fin violente, à la taille de la banqueroute du système. Il fut assassiné par des janissaires avec la complicité de son favoris *shaykh al-islām* Lafgūn qui le livra à son boureau.⁶¹ Le désastre de Ṣālīḥ Bey interprété par les "masses" comme une malédiction était en réalité le début de la chute d'un pouvoir confronté au sacré et banni par les saints. Enfin, depuis cet événement jusqu'à la chute d'Alger entre les mains de la France (le 4 juillet 1830), ordres des *khwān* et disciples n'ont cessé de s'attaquer à l'État beylical.

⁵⁹ al-^cAntarī, *Majā'at Qasanfina* (Bibliothèque Nationale Algérienne ms 2330) f. 12.

⁶⁰ Rinn, op.cit. 429.

⁶¹ Cf. Aḥmad b. Mubārak, *Ta'rikh Qasanfina* (Alger 1913).

SUFISM IN SUSPENSE: THE SUDANESE MAHDI AND THE SUFIS

R. SEÁN O'FAHEY

Controversy between Sufis and, for want of a better description, non-Sufi Muslims is almost as old as Islam. The present contribution analyses not another episode in that particular controversy, but rather the complex relations between a Sufi-turned-Mahdi and those Sufis who supported, acquiesced in, or opposed him. The actors involved were Northern Sudanese, Muslims whose religious world was profoundly Sufi, but Sufi along a continuum that went from “intellectual”, or perhaps better “scriptural”,¹ to “popular”. The present contribution has a thesis; that during the crisis of the Mahdist revolution and state (1881-98), many, perhaps the majority of, Sudanese Muslims “suspended” one set of beliefs, practices and allegiances — their Sufi identity — for another, a belief in the Mahdi. The excitement of the Mahdiyya being dashed to the ground by Kitchener and his war machine, they quietly reverted to being as before, although they could never quite be the same as before.

The revolt led by Muḥammad Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh (1844-85), the Sudanese Mahdi, against Egyptian rule in the Sudan was one of the cataclysmic upheavals in nineteenth-century Islamic history. The successful revolt permanently weakened Egypt's hegemony over the Nile Valley by creating or consolidating another Islamic identity and entity along the river — a fact still crucial today;² it became a major factor in the “Partition of Africa”³ and, not least, it defined British attitudes to the region for several decades. Within the Muslim world

¹ A term I have borrowed from Albrecht Hofheinz; see his dr. philos. thesis, *Internalizing Islam. Shaykh Muḥammad Majdhūb, scriptural Islam and local context in early nineteenth-century Sudan*, University of Bergen 1996.

² On the longterm significance of the Mahdiyya on Egyptian-Sudanese relations, both politically and historiographically, see Gabriel R. Warburg, *Historical Discord in the Nile Valley* (London 1992). See also id., ‘From Revolution to Conservatism: some aspects of Mahdist ideology and politics in the Sudan’, *Der Islam* lxx (1993) 88-111.

³ The diplomatic significance of the Mahdist Sudan in its wider context is analysed in G.N. Sanderson, *England, Europe and the Upper Nile, 1882-1899* (Edinburgh 1965).

it inspired activists like al-Afghānī and Muḥammad ʿAbduḥ; provoked discussion by establishment figures like the Shāfiʿī *mufī* in Mecca, Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān (d. 1886) and was a model for Islamic resistance to the British in Northern Nigeria.⁴

The Mahdi was a Sufi, the product of a very specific Sudanese Sufi milieu; thus, the intellectual and political history both of the revolt and the state it created offer a complex and fascinating interplay between Muslim Sufi identities and what may be termed supra or extra-Sufi identities. In this interplay, there are parallels with the contemporary experience of the *National Islamic Front* (NIF: *al-Ḥaraka al-qawmiyya al-islāmiyya*), the *de facto* ruler of the country since June 1989, in both its internal and international aspects. Both the Mahdiyya and the NIF tried/are trying to extrapolate from a specific Sudanese reality to a universal Islamic *dīn*, applicable to the Muslim world and beyond. Both the Mahdiyya and the NIF built/build upon an “enthusiasm”⁵ which has its roots in a certain strain of African Sufi Islam, far removed from, ‘ce vague piétisme dont s’accommoderait le néo-hanbalisme’, characteristic of much of the Sufism of the Arabic-speaking Muslim world of the nineteenth century.⁶

The relative obscurity surrounding the Mahdi’s family origins and the story of the family’s southward migration suggest that Muḥammad Aḥmad was a “new man”, whose career before his ma-

⁴ On al-Afghānī’s views, see Nikki R. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn “al-Afghānī”* (Berkeley 1972) 229-46; on Daḥlān, see Heather J. Sharkey, ‘Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān’s *al-Futūḥāt al-islāmiyya*: a contemporary view of the Sudanese Mahdī’, *Sudanica Africa. A Journal of Historical Sources* v (1994) 67-76. On the Nigerian connexion and the wider implications of the Mahdiyya, see Saburi Biobaku and Muhammad Al-Hajj, ‘The Sudanese Mahdiyya and the Niger-Chad Region’, in I.M. Lewis (ed.), *Islam in Tropical Africa* (London 1966) 425-41, and Thomas Hodgkin, ‘Mahdism, Messianism and Marxism in its African setting’, in Yūsuf Faḍl Ḥasan (ed.), *Sudan in Africa* (Khartoum 1972) 109-27.

⁵ On recent visits (1993, 1994 and 1995) to the Sudan I have been struck by the “triumphalist” tone among NIF leaders and their supporters. Likewise, *al-tajriba al-islāmiyya*, “the Islamic experiment”, as Ḥasan al-Turābī calls it, draws consciously on the Sudan’s Islamic past. Thus the role of the Mahdi is played down (to limit the pretensions of al-Ṣādiq al-Mahdi, present head of the family and political leader of the Umma Party) and that of the Khalīfa exalted as the true state-builder. Likewise, the NIF is assiduous in courting the smaller Sufi orders and its press always reports their participation in NIF meetings and processions. In contrast, the Khatmiyya, because of their political opposition through their party, the Democratic Unionist Party, are as much the enemy of the NIF as they were of the Mahdiyya.

⁶ Michel Chodkiewicz, review of Einar Thomassen & Bernd Radtke (eds.), *The Letters of Aḥmad ibn Idrīs* (London 1993), *Studia Islamica* lxxx (1994) 169-70.

nifestation was shaped both by an attempt to “break into” the Sufi establishment of the and by the new economic opportunities offered his people by Egyptian colonial rule.⁷

The Mahdi’s family claimed to be *ashrāf* who had emigrated from Egypt to the Dongola region in the fifteenth century and “became” Danāqla (sing. Dunqulāwī), that is Islamised Nubian-speakers. Some of the family seem by the early nineteenth century to have acquired at least a local reputation as holy men; thus one of his immediate ancestors, Muḥammad w.[= walad] Sāttī, was an expert in *ṭibb* and *ḥikma* and was a *murīd* of Aḥmad al-Ṭayyib w. al-Bashīr (d. 1824), who introduced the Sammāniyya *ṭarīqa* into the Sudan.⁸ He later joined the Khatmiyya which he led in his home district, al-Khandaq. He died in Dongola where his tomb is still to be seen.⁹ Muḥammad w. Sāttī, thus, initiated the family link with the Sammāniyya, which was to be so crucial in the Mahdi’s career.

Muḥammad Aḥmad was born, according to family tradition, in Rajab 1260/July-August 1844.¹⁰ Just about the time of his birth, his branch of the family became involved in a dispute with the local ruler, Wad Numayrī,¹¹ and ‘Abd Allāh, his father, decided to move south. The Mahdi’s father was a boatbuilder, which along with those of hunter, market broker, fisherman and sailor, was one of the trades that the Danāqla in their southward diaspora virtually monopolised.

⁷ The only scholarly biography of the Mahdi is Muḥammad Sa‘īd al-Qaddāl, *al-Imām al-Mahdī. Muḥammad Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh 1844-1885* (Beirut 1992) [this is in fact the 2nd edn. of an earlier work, published as *al-Imām al-Mahdī. Lawḥa li-thā‘ir Sūdānī* (Khartoum n.d.)]. I am preparing a detailed analysis of the Mahdi’s background and early life based on new sources, to be published as ‘Before the Manifestation: the education of the Sudanese Mahdi’.

⁸ There is no monograph devoted to the study of the Sammāniyya, either in general or in the Sudan, although it is becoming increasingly evident that Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Sammān (d. 1775) through his pupils from India, southeast Asia and the Sudan was a very influential figure in the “new”, if not neo-, Sufism of the late-eighteenth-century Muslim world. On the writings of al-Sammān and the Sudanese Sammāniyya, see R.S. O’Fahey *et alii*, *The Writings of Eastern Sudanic Africa to c. 1900*, being volume 1 of *Arabic Literature of Africa*, eds. J.O. Hunwick and R.S. O’Fahey (Leiden 1994) [hereafter, *ALA* i] 91-122. On al-Sammān’s wider influence, see my ‘Sudanese Islam in a global context; three examples’, in Awad al-Sid al-Kersani and Ali Salih Karrar (ed.), *Sudanese Sufi Studies* (forthcoming).

⁹ There is a notice in ‘Abd al-Maḥmūd Nūr al-Dā‘im, *Azāhīr al-riyād fī manāqib al-‘arif bi’llāh al-shaykh Aḥmad al-Ṭayyib* (Cairo 1954) 337.

¹⁰ Sayyid ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mahdī, a son of the Mahdi, in al-Shāṭir Buṣaylī ‘Abd al-Jalīl, *Ma‘ālim ta’rīkh Sūdān wādī ‘l-Nīl* (Cairo 1955) 196.

¹¹ By one of history’s ironies, Wad Numayrī was the ancestor of the former President, Ja‘far al-Numayrī, whose rule (1969-85) was dominated by conflict with the Mahdists.

It seems reasonable to deduce that the Mahdi's branch of the family had not achieved much more than artisanal status, but that for some reason Muḥammad Aḥmad chose or was encouraged by his family to seek a religious training/career beyond the relatively brief stay in a *khalwa* or Koran school customary at the time.¹² The Mahdi's intellectual formation may be seen as having three stages; childhood study with local holy men — shadowy figures known only by their names; extended stays at two major centres, traditionally renowned but influenced by new ideas, Kutrānj¹³ and Berber, and a final, i.e. up to his manifestation, formative period as a Sammānī aspirant and shaykh. This is not the occasion to go into details, but the three stages epitomize the changes in Sudanese Islam of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries-rural holy lineages; quasi-urban lineage-based teaching centres, and neo-Sufi hierarchical centralism.¹⁴ The stages also show that changing opportunities could be taken advantage of by “new men”.¹⁵

In 1861 Muḥammad Aḥmad became a *murīd* of Muḥammad al-Sharīf b. Nūr al-Dā'im (d. 1908), a grandson of Aḥmad al-Ṭayyib. He studied with Muḥammad al-Sharīf for seven years until the latter gave him permission to teach independently as a shaykh of the Sammāniyya.¹⁶ In 1870 Muḥammad Aḥmad moved to Ābā Island on

¹² On the role of the Koran school (*khalwa* or *masīd*), see al-Ṭayyib Muḥammad al-Ṭayyib, *al-Masīd* (Khartoum 1992).

¹³ The centre of an important holy family, the Āl 'Īsā al-Anṣārī, that combined a “traditional” holy status with an openness to new ideas; see ALA i, 14-17 and 'Izz al-Dīn al-Amin, *Qaryat Kutrānj wa-atharuhā al-'ilmī fi'l-Sūdān* (Khartoum 1975).

¹⁴ This concerns very complex processes. Two studies analyse, in complementary fashion, these developments in regard to the holy men and the *ṭuruq*; Ali Salih Karrar, *The Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan* (London 1993), and Neil McHugh, *Holymen of the Blue Nile. The Making of an Arab-islamic Community in the Nilotic Sudan 1500-1850* (Evanston 1994). The argument is taken a stage further in Hofheinz's thesis (see above fn. 1). The Sudanese socio-economic context is analysed in Jay Spaulding, *The Heroic Age in Sinnār* (East Lansing 1985), while the wider neo-Sufi context is discussed in R.S. O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke, 'Neo-Sufism Reconsidered', *Der Islam* lxx (1993) 52-87. As regards the Sudan, a synthesis of the religious, socio-economic and political analyses of the nineteenth century remains a goal for the future.

¹⁵ 'While the Mahdi and his relative, the Khalifa Muhammad Sharif, claimed to be *Ashraf*, they did not belong to one of the greater old-established religious clans', P.M. Holt, *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London 1973) 144.

¹⁶ The first document in the recently completed edition of the writings of the Mahdi, *al-Āthār al-kāmila li'l-imām al-Mahdī*, ed. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Abū Salīm, vii vols., (Khartoum 1990-94) [hereafter, *Āthār*], is an *ijāza*, dated 1292/1875-76, from the Mahdī issued to one Sirāj al-Dīn b. Aḥmad al-Junayd; *Āthār* i, 47-52.

the White Nile, where his brothers, the boatbuilders, had settled because of the abundant supply of timber and because of the island's strategic location in regard to the southern water-borne trade. Muḥammad Aḥmad's growing popularity with the local tribes appears to have brought him into collision with Muḥammad al-Sharīf; the quarrel, according to one version, came to a head at the circumcision of one of the latter's sons, when Muḥammad al-Sharīf permitted dancing, to which Muḥammad Aḥmad strongly objected. His erstwhile teacher, quoting the vituperative proverb "The Dunqulāwī is a devil in the skin of a man", cast him out his circle.¹⁷

In typical Sufi fashion, Muḥammad Aḥmad responded by finding another suitable Sammānī shaykh, whose suitability in regard to Muḥammad Aḥmad's future advancement was enhanced by his great age. He transferred his allegiance to al-Qurashī w. al-Zayn (d. 1878) of al-Masallāmiyya on the Blue Nile.¹⁸ In the year of his titular shaykh's death, Muḥammad Aḥmad made a visit to Kordofan, the province west of the White Nile where he seems to have made a wide range of contacts among religious, commercial and tribal leaders. We have an eyewitness account of this visit, albeit written down over fifty years later. In this Muḥammad Aḥmad is portrayed as a holy and learned Sufi, bringing with him a new *dhikr*, "*huwa al-qayyūm, huwa al-qayyūm, allāh al-qayyūm*", which is indeed part of the Sammānī *dhikr*, and preaching the renunciation of the vanities of this world.¹⁹ Kordofan was to be the cradle of the Mahdist revolution.

Soon after al-Qurashī's death, Muḥammad Aḥmad met with his "Stalin", the Western Sudanese holy man, ʿAbdullāhī b. Muḥammad Karrār b. ʿAlī, otherwise the Khalīfa, a strongman who was to rule the future Mahdist state until its and his demise in 1899. The Khalīfa is generally portrayed in Sudanese and Western historiography as a

¹⁷ Behind this bald summary lies a convoluted historiography, where not all the sources known to be extant, especially the Sammāniyya writings, are as yet fully accessible. P.M. Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan 1881-1898* (2nd edn. Oxford 1970) 46-48 remains the clearest analysis. Holt implicitly contrasts Muḥammad Aḥmad's "fundamentalism" with Muḥammad al-Sharīf's Sudanese Sufi "tolerance"; I prefer tentatively to see the quarrel as a "new man" versus "establishment man" generational conflict, but we know too little to be too definite either way.

¹⁸ On al-Qurashī, see McHugh, *Holy men of the Blue Nile* 140.

¹⁹ See Salih Muhammad Nur, *A Critical Edition of the Memoirs of Yūsuf Mikhāʿil* (Ph.D. Diss, University of London 1963) 62-68 (English transl.). The Arabic text has recently been published as, *Mudhakkirāt Yūsuf Mikhāʿil ʿan awākhir al-ʿahd al-Turki waʿl-Mahdiyya biʿl-Sūdān* (London n.d.).

"Western" outsider from the cattle nomads or Baqqāra of Darfur, a semi-literate *faqīr*, of partly West African Fulani origin, obsessed with the *ishārāt al-sāʿa*, "the signs of the hour" and the coming of *al-mahdī al-muntaẓar*.²⁰ Hitherto unremarked is the Sammānī connexion between Muḥammad Aḥmad and ʿAbdullāhi in that the latter's father, Muḥammad Karrār, is said to have been initiated into the Sammāniyya by Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Shakitābī, a student of Aḥmad al-Ṭayyib, who died at Sāni Karaw in Darfur.²¹

Under one perspective and in terms of its initial phases and earliest actors, the Mahdist revolt can almost be termed a *coniuratio* Sammāniyya.

Why was the Mahdi so successful? The causes of the revolt have been discussed elsewhere,²² but one obvious point needs to be stressed; the emergence of a "new" northern Sudanese Islamic identity just before and during the period of colonial rule (1820-85) created a common discourse that the Mahdi was able to harness for his own purposes. The growth of an urban mercantile middle-class, the coming of the "neo-Sufi" *ṭuruq* (Khatmiyya, Rashidiyya, Ismāʿīliyya, Tijāniyya and Idrisiyya), the greater and more fluent use of Arabic both as a language of learning and the medium through song (*madāʾih*) of popular spirituality, all created a field in which the Mahdi's message could resonate.²³ And that field was overwhelmingly Sufi; Egyptian colonial attempts to implant a local Azhar-trained ʿulamāʾ class failed. In any event, a goodly proportion of the

²⁰ Viviane Amina Yagi, *Le Khalifa ʿAbdullāhi, sa Vie et sa Politique* (thèse de doctorat, Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier 1990) offers a revisionist portrait of the Khalifa as a "patron of learning", as does, in a more restrained fashion, Robert S. Kramer, *Holy City on the Nile: Omdurman, 1885-1898* (Ph.D. Diss., Northwestern University 1991). Holt, *Studies* 144, gives what maybe regarded as the mainstream view, "ʿAbdallāhi was conscious of bearing, among the sedentaries, the stigma of an uncouth barbarian".

²¹ Nūr al-Dāʾim, *Azāhīr al-riyāḍ* 327-28. ʿAbd al-Maḥmūd Nūr al-Dāʾim makes no allusion to the identity of Muḥammad Karrār, although most likely he knew. Viviane Yagi in an unpublished study pushes the Sammāniyya/Khalifa connexion a generation further back by describing on the basis of oral sources the Khalifa's grandfather, ʿAlī, as the head of the Sammāniyya in Darfur (*Silhouettes Mahdistes*, unpublished typescript — I am most grateful to Dr. Yagi for a copy).

²² Holt's succinct overview remains fundamental, *Mahdist State* 32-44. The deeper roots of socio-economic discontent are analysed in Anders Bjørkelo, *Prelude to the Mahdiyya. Peasants and Traders in the Shendi Region, 1821-1885* (Cambridge 1989).

²³ McHugh, *Holymen of the Blue Nile* 1-32 describes the historiography of this process, both the new Arab Muslim identity and its concomitant, the need for a new past. The literary flowering of the nineteenth century, both scholarly and popular, is recorded in *ALA* i.

colonial religious establishment were to go over to the Mahdi quite willingly.

Sudanese holy men were concerned with the Mahdi-idea and wrote about it. Thus Ismāʿil al-Walī (1792/3-1863), a student of Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Mirghanī (d. 1852) founder of the Khat-miyya *ṭarīqa*, who established an independent order in central Kordofan, the Ismāʿīliyya, wrote three treatises on the question.²⁴ Likewise the Qādirī shaykh, Ibrāhīm w. al-Kabbāshī (d. 1869/70), whose daughter was to marry the Mahdi's greatest general, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān w. al-Nujūmī (d. 1889) wrote a work entitled, *al-Mahdī al-muntaẓar*.²⁵ I am not suggesting here that it was only in the nineteenth century under the impact of colonial rule that Sudanese holy men began to be concerned about the end of time — after all, Ḥasan al-Turābī, present leader of the NIF, descends from Ḥamad al-Naḥlān “Wad al-Turābī” (d. 1116/1704/5) who declared himself to be the Mahdi while on the pilgrimage and announced, ‘I have wasted my life with *Khalīl* [= *Mukhtaṣar* of Khalīl b. Ishāq]’.²⁶ But certainly the pre-occupation with the Mahdi-idea seems to have been greater in the nineteenth century; this is no doubt linked to an oppressive colonial presence.

What was meant by the Mahdi-idea is still a matter for investigation. In his discussion of the Mahdist revolt in the Sudan, based presumably on reports from pilgrims and others coming to the Ḥijāz, the eminent Shāfiʿī divine, Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān, distinguishes between a *mahdī* as a divinely-guided reformer, here almost the equivalent of *mujaddid*, and *al-mahdī al-muntaẓar*, “the expected Mahdi”. He speculates that Muḥammad Aḥmad may be a sincere example of the former, but is certainly not the latter.²⁷ In similar fashion, al-Mirghanī seems to have a nuanced understanding of the Mahdi-idea; thus in talking of his own position:

²⁴ They are (1) *al-Bayān al-kāmil fī maʿrifat al-kawkab al-fāḍil al-imām al-mahdī waʾl-khatim al-shāmī li-asrār al-ḥālī waʾl-nāzil*, (2) *Jāmiʿ maʿānī al-kalim al-wajiz al-naẓm fī maʿrifat sayyidi al-mahdī waʾl-khatim*, (3) *al-Lamʿ al-bādī ʿan kashf ḥaqīqat al-khatim waʾl-imām al-hādī*. All three works were completed in 1239/1823-24 at a time when the author was in difficulties with the Egyptian colonial regime. On al-Walī's writings and theosophy, see ALA i, 228-37; Bernd Radtke, ‘Lehrer-Schüler-Enkel’, *Oriens* xxxiii (1992) 106-119, and id., ‘Ismāʿil al-Walī. Ein sudanesischer Theosoph des 19. Jahrhunderts’, *Der Islam*, lxxii (1995) 148-55. For a general history of the Ismāʿīliyya, see Mahmoud Abdalla Ibrahim, *The History of the Ismāʿīliyya Ṭarīqa in the Sudan: 1792-1914* (Ph.D. Diss, University of London 1980).

²⁵ ALA i, 282.

²⁶ McHugh, *Holy men of the Blue Nile* 102-3.

²⁷ Sharkey, ‘Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān’ 72.

'The meaning of the seal is under four aspects: the first is the Prophetic seal, the second is the Mahdist seal, the third is my seal [i.e. Muḥammad °Uthmān], and the fourth seal is that of him after whom there will be no other saint (*walī*)'.²⁸

But whatever the theological niceties, there was among the holy men of the nineteenth century a sense of the *indirās al-islām*, "the extinction of Islam", a sense of the end of time, an expectation of calamity.²⁹ How widespread such ideas were has yet to be investigated, but certainly the Sudanese learned classes, the Sufi ulama/holymen, were pre-occupied by such ideas.³⁰ And it was to the holy men — his own class — to whom the Mahdi first appealed.

One, more technical, question that remains to be investigated in depth is the influence of Ibn al-°Arabī on the "new" Sudanese Muslim consciousness.³¹ Indirect evidence suggests that it was considerable and nowhere more so than in the Mahdī's discourse.

Between his formal manifestation in Rabī° II/March 1881 and his death in June 1885, six months after the capture of Khartoum, the Mahdi wrote or dictated over a thousand letters, proclamations (*manshūr*), warnings (*indhār*), visions (*ḥaḍra*) and rulings on the great range of issues, doctrinal and practical, brought forth by the revolution.

Unsurprisingly, the first round of proclamations and announcements were sent to Sammānī and other leading Sufi shaykhs. In these the Mahdi, using Koranic, *ḥadīth* and other proof-texts, proclaims his Mahdī-ship, denounces the Egyptian colonial regime and their Sudanese collaborators as *kāfirs*, and invites their recipients to join him on *hijra* to Jabal Qadīr (=Māsa) in Kordofan. In the earliest letters, visions (*ḥaḍra*) or, as Holt prefers, colloquies, with the Prophet legitimize his status, often by reference to famous Sudanese Sufis, past and present. Thus, writing on 1 Sha°bān 1298/29 June 1881 to Muḥammad al-Ṭayyib al-Baṣīr of the Ḥalawīyyīn of the Gezira —

²⁸ Ja°far al-Šādiq al-Mirghani, *Risālat al-khatm fī ba°ḍ al-mubashshirāt*, in *al-Rasā°il al-Mirghaniyya* (Cairo 1979) 109-20; Radtke, 'Lehrer' 104.

²⁹ See further my 'Islamic Hegemonies in the Sudan', in Louis Brenner (ed.), *Muslim Identity and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa* (London 1993) 28, n. 30.

³⁰ Again the parallels with modern times are striking. The dislocations, but also opportunities, of Egyptian colonial rule in the Sudan in the nineteenth century (as exemplified in the life-story of the Mahdi's family) may be paralleled in the dilemmas of modern Sudanese — and other — Muslim intellectuals. London may be Sodom, to mix metaphors, but at least you can publish freely in the former.

³¹ O'Fahey and Radtke, 'Neo-Sufism Reconsidered' 71-73.

one of the earliest proclamations — after a visionary colloquy (*ḥaḍra*) with the Prophet, the Khalifa ʿAbdullāhi, one of the actors in the colloquy, continues:

‘Then Shaykh ʿAbdullāhi said, “O! Shaykh al-Ṭayyib Bashīr³² we believe in the Mahdī-ship of our shaykh, but the people do not believe.” Shaykh al-Ṭayyib replied, “Since the time of your shaykh’s birth the people of the inner state and reality (*ahl al-bāṭin wa’l-ḥaqīqa*) have known that he was the Mahdi. When forty days had passed, the plants and rocks knew that he was the Mahdi. The Sufi way (*al-ṭarīqa*) consists of humility (*al-dhull*), repentance (*al-inkisār*), little food (*qillat al-ṭaʿām*), little to drink (*qillat al-sharāb*), patience (*al-ṣabr*) and visiting the saints (*ziyārat al-sādāt*).³³ And these are six. Likewise the Mahdi-ship has six [characteristics]; war (*al-ḥarb*), resoluteness (*al-ḥazm*), determination (*al-ʿazm*), trust in God (*al-tawakkul*), reliance upon God (*al-iʿtimād ʿalā ʾllāh*) and that his predictions turn out to be right (*ittifāq al-qawl*). And These twelve came together in no one save him’.³⁴

In other proclamations, especially those addressed to leaders outside the Sudan like Ḥayātū b. Saʿīd of Sokoto or Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Sanūsī, head of the Sanūsiyya *ṭarīqa*, some of the great names in Sufism are brought in; thus one proof-passage brings together Ibn al-ʿArabī and Aḥmad b. Idrīs (d. 1837):

‘With Him are the keys of the Unseen; none knows them but He (6: 59).’ Shaykh Muḥyīʾl-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī, may God be pleased with him, said, “The knowledge about who the Mahdi is is like knowledge of the Hour [of resurrection], which only God Most High knows (*ʿilm al-Mahdī ka-ʿilm al-sāʿa wa-lā yaʿlam al-sāʿa illā Allāh taʿālā*).”³⁵ And sayyidi shaykh Aḥmad b. Idrīs, may God be pleased with him, said, “Fourteen books of the people of God (*ahl Allāh*) have lied about the Mahdi.” He then said, “He will appear from a place unknown to them and in a condition they will deny’.³⁶

³² Aḥmad al-Ṭayyib w. al-Bashīr.

³³ The editor, Abū Salīm, notes here, “The Mahdi did not forbid visiting the tombs of saints, but neither did he commend it. Thus, while they were on their way to Khartoum, he ordered the Khalifa ʿAbdullāhi to visit the tomb of his father, but then countermanded his order, fearing that such visits were a custom (*ʿāda*) that could lead to dissension (*fitna*)”, *Āthār* i, 78, n. 8.

³⁴ *Āthār* i, 78-79 ((76-81); see also Holt, *Mahdist State* 105.

³⁵ This passage is the only one in the writings of the Mahdi where Ibn al-ʿArabī is cited by name and is always followed by the quotation from Ibn Idrīs, which suggests that the Mahdi may have derived it from a text by or transmitted from Ibn Idrīs, who had several Sudanese students as well as a profound general influence on Sudanese Islam; see further my *Enigmatic Saint. Aḥmad ibn Idrīs and the Idrīsī Tradition* (London 1990). Chodkiewicz identifies the quotation as being in fact from al-Qāshānī (‘mais publiés sous le nom d’Ibn Arabī’), *Taʾwīlāt* (Beirut 1968) ii, 460; see Michel Chodkiewicz, *Un Océan sans Rivage* (Paris 1992) 166 n. 37 where he speculates on whether the Mahdi may have had access to the “lost” major *tafsīr* of Ibn al-ʿArabī.

³⁶ The passage, with variants, appears in several proclamations; they are *Āthār* i, 92-93 [“To his beloved”]; i, 98 [Dafʿ Allāh Baqawī]; i, 137 [“To his beloved”]; i, 141 [tribes of

A comprehensive analysis of the Mahdi's writings has yet to be made, a task for the future made easier by the publication of Abū Salīm's edition in seven volumes. Despite there being only one overt reference to Ibn al-ʿArabī in the *corpus*, my impression is that the Mahdi's language was in fact profoundly coloured by the former's lexicon. This seems to come out more clearly in his sermons and "assemblies" (*majālis*)³⁷ than in his letters which, after the initial flush of calls to join him, begin to settle down to dealing with the more prosaic matters of booty, the status of wives of "unbelievers" (i.e. anti-Mahdist Muslims) and suchlike.³⁸ It is the sheer range of the Mahdi's writings, produced, as it were "on the hoof", in the midst of an ongoing revolution, that make them so fascinating and unique.³⁹

The manifestation of the Mahdi, of course, rendered the *ṭuruq* and *madhāhib* null and void. This was the Mahdi's reason for ordering their abolition. In a letter of 1301/1883-84 to two leading holy men, Muḥammad al-Amin Dafʿ Allāh and Ḥāmid Muḥammad Sulfāb, he gives his reasoning step-by-step.⁴⁰ He has, by authority, abolished the brotherhoods and schools; that, furthermore, the people of the schools and orders were cognizant of the fact that the Mahdi would abolish them before his actual manifestation. He has ordered the people to leave the schools and brotherhoods, whose leaders would themselves have disavowed them if they had been alive in his time. Finally, he reiterates a basic command given to all to whom he wrote, that it was their duty to emigrate to him, whose *madhhab* was the Book and Sunna.

How this translated into practical politics is less easily documented. In the heartland of the Mahdist state, *al-buqʿa al-ṭāhira*, "The

northern Darfur]; i, 163 [Muḥammad al-Amin al-Hindi]; i, 213 [Ḥayātū b. Saʿid]; i, 337 [Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Sanūsī], and i, 341 [Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Sanūsī]. — I have been unable to trace the passage from Ibn Idrīs in any of his writings accessible to me, but it could well have been transmitted orally to the Mahdi via someone like ʿAbdullāh al-Dufārī (d. 1908), a student of Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd, a student of Ibn Idrīs, who taught and later joined the Mahdi; see Karrar, *Sufi Brotherhoods* 110-13.

³⁷ *Āthār*, vols. vi and vii.

³⁸ See Holt, *Mahdist State* 128-32.

³⁹ The fascination, not the least, lies in the fact that whereas modern Islamists often talk in theoretical terms of the need to apply *ijtihād*, etc. to new situations, as for example does Ḥasan al-Turābī in his *Qaḍāyā al-tajdīd* (Khartoum 1991), the Mahdi's writings provide a four-year record of an exceptional mind doing just that in a revolutionary situation.

⁴⁰ *Āthār* iii, 319-20.

pure place”, i.e. Omdurman, the *adhkār* and *awrād* of the orders were undoubtedly no longer sung aloud. Occasionally warnings were issued; on 17 Shawwāl 1305/27 June 1888 the Khalīfa wrote to the people of Kassala telling them to end their adherence to the Khatmiyya — but this may be interpreted as as much a political decree, given the Khatmiyya’s support of the Egyptians, as a theological decision. Another kind of explanation was offered to Robert Kramer by a prominent Rikābī (an ancient holy lineage) member of the Khatmiyya in Omdurman:

‘During the Mahdiyya, all Sufi *awrād* were replaced by the Mahdi’s *rātib*,⁴¹ which was read devotedly by everyone; after the reconquest (and the outlawing of the *rātib*), people returned to their original Sufi practices. This represented no formal, structural change — the *khalīfa* of the Rikābī Khatmiyya had also been their *amīr* during the Mahdiyya, since the *rātib* was intended as a substitute for the Sufi *awrād*; nor, finally, did it represent any change in belief, since “All were means to the same end, the worship of God”.⁴²

The ambiguity of this seems to be the hallmark of the relationship between the Mahdiyya and *ṣūfiyya*. Indeed, the Mahdi often seems himself to be inconsistent; on 17 Rabī^c II 1302/4 February 1885 he writes to the descendants of the great Qādirī shaykh, Idrīs w. al-Arbāb (d. c. 1650), appointing ‘Alī Ḥamad Barakāt *khalīfa* in place of his father for “the way of right guidance (*ṭarīq al-hudā*)” — this may not have been understood in the same way by the letter’s recipients as by its writer.⁴³

Holt notes that “The men of religion who inaugurated and headed the revolt were parvenus”, and elsewhere describes a division, a kind of crisis of identity, between indigenous Sufis and Azhar-influenced ‘*ulamā*’.⁴⁴ It may have been even more complicated. The classic example, as Holt describes, is that of Aḥmad al-Azhārī (d. 1882), a son of Ismā‘īl al-Walī, who chose the Azharī path, wrote a denunciation of the Mahdi’s pretensions and died in battle against the

⁴¹ The text of the *rātib* is given in *Āthār* vi, 36-70. This is followed by various writings on the *rātib*; see further ALA i, 328-30.

⁴² Kramer, *Holy City* 156-57.

⁴³ *Āthār* iv, 285. Elsewhere, he openly acknowledges the existence of the orders; thus in writing to one Daḡ Allāh, a student of the Qādirī shaykh, al-‘Ubayd w. Badr (d. 1884), he calls him one of the “people of the Way (*ahl al-ṭarīqa*)”; *ibid.* ii, 70.

⁴⁴ Holt, *Studies* 144 and 127, “There thus developed the possibility of a schism between the official religious establishment, with which the Khatmiyya had close links, and the older indigenous Muslim leadership, less orthodox in its theology than the recognised ‘*ulamā*’, but still with infinitely more appeal to the mass of the Sudanese’.

Mahdists in his native Kordofan,⁴⁵ *contra* his brother, Muḥammad al-Makkī (d. 1906), who went over to the Mahdiyya and remained a close advisor of the Khalīfa until the end of the state.⁴⁶

For others, the situation was perhaps more ambiguous. Those I have in mind here are what may be termed the key intellectuals around the Mahdi and the Khalīfa, namely Ismā'īl b. °Abd al-Qādir al-Kurdufānī (d. 1897), who wrote a *sīra* of the Mahdi; Ḥusayn w. al-Zahrā° (d. 1895), who wrote a verse defence of the Mahdi, and Ḥasan al-°Abbādī (d. 1907), who also wrote an extended defence (a lithograph of 268 pages) of the Mahdi — the first two had studied at al-Azhar. A question to be raised, even if it is impossible to answer, is whether among this group of intellectuals, to whom may be added the Hāshimāb and Āl Ḥajjāz families, there were to be found true Mahdists, or rather expedient “nationalists”, adhering to an ideology that united them with the masses?⁴⁷ It was Ḥusayn w. al-Zahrā° who in his *al-Āyāt al-bayyināt* uses, seemingly for the first time in Sudanese literature, *Sūdāniyyīn* and *umma Sūdāniyya* in a modern sense.⁴⁸

What is also of interest is how easily some of these key intellectuals around the Mahdi and Khalīfa changed allegiance with the destruction of the Mahdist state by the British in 1898. Ḥasan al-°Abbādī served the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium as a qadi, while Abū'l-Qāsim b. Aḥmad b. Hāshim (d. 1934) and his brother, al-Ṭayyib (d. 1924) of the Hāshimāb family, both of whom had served as secretaries or qadis during the Mahdiyya, loyally served the new infidel regime; as did Muddaththir b. Ibrāhīm al-Ḥajjāz (d. 1937).⁴⁹ Muddaththir, indeed, had a varied career; after studying in the Ḥijāz, he joined the Mahdi and became his head scribe, writing the master copy for lithographing of the latter's *Rātīb*. After the Reconquest, he became a member of the “Board of Ulema”, a committee set up by the British to promote a “safe”, i.e. non-revolutionary form of

⁴⁵ See ALA i, 239-41, and the references given there.

⁴⁶ ALA i, 237-39.

⁴⁷ Again, biographies and bibliographies on all referred to here will be found in ALA i.

⁴⁸ See Rudolph Peters, ‘Islam and the legitimization of power: the Mahdi-revolt in the Sudan’, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, supplement v, XI. *Deutscher Orientalistentag vom 24. bis 29 März 1980*, 409-20. In nineteenth-century Sudanese documents, “Sūdānī” generally refers to “blacks”, the assumption being that they were slaves or, at least, enslavable.

⁴⁹ For biographies, etc., see ALA i. On this generation and their immediate successors in the early Condominium see Heather J. Sharkey, *Colonialism and the Culture of Nationalism in the Northern Sudan, 1898-1956* (Ph.D. thesis, Princeton 1998).

Effendi Islam, but also was active in the Islamic World Congress held in Mecca in June 1926.⁵⁰

Significantly the Hāshimāb brothers and Muddaththir al-Ḥajjāz had in common an allegiance to the Tijāniyya, which they had taken *before* the Mahdiyya from the Mauritanian Tijānī missionary, Muḥammad b. al-Mukhtār al-Shinqīṭī, known as Wad al-^cĀliya (d. 1881-82). During the Mahdiyya, their adherence to the Tijāniyya was, as it were, in “suspense”; the Mahdiyya over, the Hāshimāb brothers and Muddaththir moved quickly to establish a Tijānī *zāwiya* in Omdurman. They were equally expeditious in establishing in the same city in 1901 *al-Ma^chad al-^cilmī* (the nucleus of the present Omdurman Islamic University) for the training of qadis, *ma³dhūns*, etc.⁵¹

The same shifts in allegiances can be seen among the poets. The nineteenth century saw in the northern Sudan an efflorescence of sung praise poems to the Prophet and various Sufi shaykhs.⁵² During the Mahdiyya, this genre was devoted to singing the Mahdi’s praises; indeed the Mahdi is said himself to have sung during one of his campaigns one of the most famous of these songs, that of Muḥammad ‘Umar al-Bannā’ which opens *al-ḥarb ṣabr*, “War is steadfastness”.⁵³ Thus Aḥmad w. Sulaymān (d. 1919), a follower of the Qādirī shaykh, al-^cUbayd w. Badr of Umm Ḍubbān, wrote poetry in praise of his shaykh. Like his shaykh, he became an enthusiastic Mahdist in whose praise he wrote poetry; after the Mahdiyya he returned to Umm Ḍubbān and reverted to writing traditional *madā³ih*.⁵⁴ Aḥmad w. Sa^cd (d. c. 1926) is perhaps the best known of several poets who went over to the Mahdi and wrote in praise of him; indeed the Mahdi wrote to him (9 Rajab 1301/5 May 1884)

⁵⁰ On his career, see ALA i, 293-97. Muddaththir is an interesting figure, whose career would well repay study. There are sources in abundance in the National Records Office, Khartoum and in the library of his grandson, Muddaththir Majdhūb Muddaththir, in Omdurman.

⁵¹ Two works that throw much light on Islamic institutions and thinking in the Sudan in the immediate aftermath of the Mahdiyya are Muḥammad al-Mubārak ‘Abd Allāh, *Ma^ca ‘l-ta^clīm al-dīnī fi ‘l-Sūdān*, vol. i (all published) (Cairo 1972), and Muḥammad Sulaymān, *Dawr al-Azhar fi ‘l-Sūdān*, (Cairo 1984).

⁵² ALA i, 73-90 records this development.

⁵³ Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Rahīm, *Nafathāt al-yarā³ fi ‘l-ādāb wa ‘l-ta³rikh wa ‘l-ijtimā^c* (Khartoum 1936), vol. i (all published), 100; see further ALA i, 339. On the role of poetry in the Mahdiyya, see Heather J. Sharkey, ‘Mahdist Oral Praise Poetry’, *Sudanica Africa. A Journal of Historical Sources* v (1994) 95-110.

⁵⁴ ALA i, 80-81.

authorizing the composition of *madā'ih*.⁵⁵ After the Mahdiyya, he hid his Mahdist poetry and reverted to earlier themes.

Poetry was also used against the Mahdi. His old shaykh, Muḥammad al-Sharīf, was prevailed upon by the Egyptian Governor, 'Abd al-Qādir Pasha Ḥilmī (governor, 1882-83) to write in denunciation of the *mutamahdī*; the resultant long *qaṣīda* was printed on the government lithograph press. No complete copy survives, but the surviving fragments are pretty fierce against his errant student.⁵⁶ But, then Muḥammad al-Sharīf joined the Mahdi.

In addition to various letters denouncing the Mahdi by Egyptian and Sudanese '*ulamā*' that were written at the authorities' urging — Aḥmad al-Azhārī wrote an encouragement to obedience, *al-Naṣīḥa al-ʿamma li-ahl al-islām ʿan mukhālafat al-ḥukkām wa'l-khurūj ʿan ṭāʿat al-imām*,⁵⁷ the Imām here being the Ottoman Sultan — the colonial regime also sought to mobilise Sufi opposition. Their main ally was the Mīrghanī family, the leaders of the Khatmiyya *ṭarīqa*, whom the Mahdi tried unsuccessfully to win to his cause.⁵⁸ In 1885, after the fall of Khartoum, Muḥammad Sirr al-Khatim (d. 1916), grandson of Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Mīrghanī, was still apparently sending lithographed appeals to his more prominent followers. One has survived, dated 8 Dhū'l-qa'da 1302/19 August 1885 (when its author was in Egypt), addressed to a leading northern Sudanese merchant, 'Abd Allāh Bey Ḥamza. He describes the Mahdi as recalcitrant towards the sharia, the Islamic community and human compassion (*al-shafaqa al-insāniyya*); the Khedive of Egypt was the deputy of the *khilāfa nabawiyya* (i.e. Ottoman Sultan) and, in a more direct appeal to his addressee's source of income, that he, 'Abd Allāh Ḥamza, needed peace since he traded from "Egypt to the lands of the Fallāta". At the time of writing, the merchant in question was indeed on his way to the safety of Egypt, despite an earlier personal appeal from the Mahdi to stay and join him.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *Āthār* ii, 36.

⁵⁶ Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Abū Salīm, *al-Ḥarakat al-Mahdiyya fī 'l-Sūdān* (Khartoum 1989) 51-52; see also *ALA* i, 118.

⁵⁷ See Robert S. Kramer, 'An Annotated Translation of the Letter of Aḥmad al-Azhārī in Denunciation of the Sudanese Mahdī', (MA Diss., University of Chicago 1984).

⁵⁸ In a letter dated 13 Muḥarram 1301/14 November 1883, the Mahdi writes to Abū Bakr Jaʿfar al-Mīrghanī that he is aware of their plotting against him, but nevertheless offers them a pardon if they will join him; *Āthār* ii, 32-34. See further Holt, *Mahdist State* 83.

⁵⁹ The letter is NI 298.15/26a in the Bergen Collection; on 'Abd Allāh Bey Ḥamza, see

The only major Sufi figure the Mahdi appealed to outside the Sudan was the leader of the Sanūsiyya *ṭarīqa*, Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Sanūsī (d. 1902), to whom he offered the Khalīfaship of ʿUthmān in his new religious/political order.⁶⁰ No reply was received.

When the British took over, there were many different responses from the Sudanese. Some tried to understand what had gone wrong and quietly wrote *risālas* on this theme and read the *rātib*; in the privacy of their homes for the twenty-five years or so after the Reconquest when it was banned.⁶¹ Others mounted small-scale revolts, none of which amounted to very much, but the British were to have an exaggerated fear of *nabī ʿĪsā* and the like for some twenty years after the Reconquest.⁶² The majority of the northern riverain Sudanese reverted to their previous Sufi allegiances — the suspension of earlier loyalties was over —, encouraged by the British who saw the orders as a bulwark against any possible renewal of the Mahdist contagion. To give only one example, Muḥammad al-Makki, one of the Khalīfa's closest advisors, but also the head of the Ismāʿīliyya *ṭarīqa*, in suspension during the Mahdiyya, after 1898 simply returned to his home in Kordofan to rebuild his order. Indeed, the early twentieth century saw a new flowering of the brotherhoods in new urban settings.

When the Mahdi family and its followers were allowed by the British to re-emerge after the First World War, both as a religious and later political movement, in organisation and character it began to resemble a Sufi order. Some Mahdists were (and are) not comfortable with this; others, especially in Darfur, combine, in a kind of final suspension of doctrinal consistency, adherence to the Tijāniyya with

Bjørkelo, *Prelude to the Mahdiyya* 124-30 and on Muḥammad al-Mirghani, *ALA* i, 200-1. The letter from the Mahdi, dated 22 Shaʿbān 1302/6 June 1885, is in *Āthār* ii, 169-70.

⁶⁰ See Holt, *Mahdist State* 113.

⁶¹ A number of these post-Mahdist treatises, attempting to understand what went wrong and which make fascinating reading, will be published in Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Abū Salīm, *al-Khuṣūma bayna 'l-Mahdī wa 'l-ʿulamāʾ* (forthcoming). See, as one example, Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Abū Salīm and Knut S. Vikør, 'The man who believed in the Mahdi', *Sudanica Africa. A Journal of Historical Sources* ii (1991) 29-52. The ban on the Mahdi's *rātib* was effectively rescinded in 1925, in which year the British Director of Intelligence commented, "... In view of the innocuous, not to say improving nature of the doctrines inculcated in the *Rātib*, it does not seem reasonable or possible to prohibit its sale" (National Records Office, Khartoum, Intelligence, 7/1/3).

⁶² See Alexander Solon Cudsi, 'Sudanese Resistance to British Rule, 1900—1920' (M.Sc. Diss., University of Khartoum 1969).

support of the Mahdists, now the Umma Party.⁶³

For a generation, the northern Sudanese suspended or sublimated their Sufi identity in favour of Mahdism; neither Mahdism nor Sufism in the Sudan were ever to be the same.⁶⁴

⁶³ This is based on observations in Darfur over several years. As some of my informants, mostly Tijānī, explained in the nineteen-seventies, 'We vote Umma, but we don't read the *rātib*'. On a recent (1993) visit to Darfur, I gained the impression that the most significant challenge to the NIF in the province was coming from a renewed Tijāniyya, linked to the branch of the Senegalese Tijānī shaykh, Ibrāhīm Niasse (d. 1975), rather than from the Mahdists.

⁶⁴ This is my first essay into Mahdist studies; I wish to acknowledge my intellectual debt to my teacher, Professor P.M. Holt.

LES CONFRÉRIES SOUFIES EN IRAK ARABE AUX DIX-NEUVIÈME ET VINGTIÈME SIÈCLES FACE AU CHIISME DUODÉCIMAINE ET AU WAHHABISME

PIERRE-JEAN LUIZARD

Berceau du soufisme, l'Irak¹ a été une terre d'élection pour les premiers mystiques de l'islam. Les plus célèbres d'entre eux, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Rābi^ca al-^cAdawiyya, Ma^crūf al-Karkhī, al-Muḥāsibī, al-Junayd, al-Ḥallāj, al-Ghazālī, ^cUmar al-Suhrawardī et bien d'autres y ont marqué de leur empreinte une terre mésopotamienne déjà fertile en événements fondateurs. Là, sont enterrés les pères spirituels de deux des plus importants ordres soufis: ^cAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī et Aḥmad al-Rifā^cī. Si l'on ajoute le souvenir des Compagnons du Prophète, comme Zubayr, dans la ville qui porte son nom près de Basra, et le tombeau d'Abū Ḥanīfa dans le quartier d'A^cẓamiyya à Baghdad, sans omettre les mausolées des Imams chiites, qui figurent sur la plupart des généalogies de la sainteté soufie, on voit que la piété populaire, vers laquelle s'est ensuite orientée le soufisme confrérique, a dans ce pays des points d'ancrage qui semblent plus solides que dans n'importe quelle autre terre d'islam. Cependant, le soufisme confrérique a connu en Irak un défi majeur, qui l'a réduit à un phénomène de plus en plus minoritaire au sein d'une communauté elle-même minoritaire. En effet, l'Irak est aussi le berceau du chiisme: c'est l'évolution de ce dernier, sous sa forme duodécimaine, et la particularité du chiisme en Irak, qui ont déterminé la situation actuelle du soufisme sur les rives du Tigre et de l'Euphrate. L'utilisation politique des confréries soufies par le pouvoir de la Porte, puis celui de la puissance mandataire, illustre bien quel fut leur rôle dans la genèse de ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler la "question irakienne".²

¹ Cette étude se limite à la partie arabe de l'Irak, correspondant à *al-^cIrāq al-^carabī* des géographes arabes. En conséquence, le Kurdistan n'est pas traité ici.

² On entend, par «question irakienne», la pérennité d'un rapport de domination confessionnelle (des sunnites sur les chiites) et ethnique (des Arabes sur les Kurdes), occulté en tant que tel dans un cadre politique mis en place par une puissance étrangère, la Grande-Bretagne. La population irakienne se compose de trois grandes communautés, les chiites,

Là où il existe un guide spirituel, il ne peut y en avoir deux. C'est sans doute à cette loi qu'on peut se référer pour expliquer le divorce entre le soufisme et le chiisme duodécimain à la fin du seizième siècle. Divorce, car le soufisme avait été jusque là un vecteur important des sympathies prochiites parmi les sunnites. Les relations délicates du soufisme avec les Imams des chiites expliquent que les cheikhs soufis font remonter leur chaîne initiatique (*silsila*) aux huit premiers Imams chiites seulement. Le huitième Imam, °Alī al-Riḍā, est ainsi présenté comme le maître de Ma°rūf al-Karkhī, le premier à enseigner l'ésotérisme de l'unicité divine (*tawḥīd*), thème auquel s'attachera son disciple à Bagdad, al-Junayd. Au cours des treizième et quatorzième siècles, le chiisme s'appropriait simultanément certaines conceptions du soufisme ainsi que la *falsafa*, la philosophie d'inspiration hellénistique. L'interpénétration du chiisme et du soufisme s'intensifia aux quatorzième et quinzième siècles, notamment sous l'impulsion de Ḥaydar Āmulī, célèbre alim qui vécut à Bagdad à la fin du quatorzième siècle. En Perse, les plus importantes confréries soufies évoluaient vers des positions chiites, à l'instar de l'ordre des Séfévides. L'intégration du soufisme par la doctrine imamite, et l'avènement de la dynastie séfévide qui en fut l'un des aboutissements, allaient bouleverser la situation des chiites au sein du monde islamique, conséquence de la conversion massive de l'Iran au chiisme, de même qu'ils allaient susciter les développements doctrinaux ultérieurs concernant le statut des ulama. De nombreux ulama chiites, parmi les plus importants, avaient donc été influencés par le soufisme. Qu'il suffise de citer Ibn Ṭāwūs, °Allāma al-Ḥillī, Shahīd Awwal ou Shahīd Thānī qui, soit avaient de la sympathie pour le soufisme, soit s'en réclamaient ouvertement. Ces relations intimes furent brutalement interrompues. Le soufisme fut supprimé par les ulama chiites sous les derniers chahs séfévides. Le chiisme se sépara alors du soufisme, tout en l'intégrant.³

Arabes dans leur grande majorité, et qui sont plus de la moitié de la population, les Arabes sunnites et les Kurdes. Le système politique établi par la puissance mandataire en 1920 a été conçu pour assurer aux élites arabes sunnites un pouvoir exclusif sur l'Etat irakien, pouvoir qu'elles ont conservé depuis.

³ Sur les relations intimes entre chiisme et soufisme avant le divorce de la fin de la période séfévide, l'ouvrage le plus complet est la thèse de Ph.D. de Kāmil M. al-Shaybī, *Studies in the Interaction of Sufism and Shi'ism to the rise of the Safavids* (Université de Cambridge 1961). Du même auteur, se référer à *al-Fikr al-shī'ī wa'l-naza'āt al-ṣūfiyya* (Bagdad 1386/1966). Voir également Seyyed Hossein Nasr, 'Le shī'isme et le soufisme. Leurs relations principales et historiques', dans *Le shī'isme imāmīte*, Colloque de Strasbourg (Paris 1970). Ainsi que Henry Corbin, *En Islam iranien. Aspects spirituels et philosophiques*

A cette époque, les ulama chiites avaient suffisamment consolidé leur pouvoir pour commencer à prendre leurs distances avec les souverains séfévides. Ce n'est pas un hasard si le concept de *nā'ib al-^cāmm*,⁴ qui n'était que la première étape de la légitimation par le dogme duodécimain de la montée en puissance des ulama, fut élaboré à l'époque des derniers chahs séfévides. Les ulama entendaient s'approprier une à une les prérogatives des Imams infaillibles, mouvement qui allait se poursuivre jusqu'à aujourd'hui.

La suppression du soufisme fut l'oeuvre de Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī (mort en 1699), le *shaykhulislām* d'Iṣfahān, dont le père était membre de la confrérie soufie chiite Dhahabiyya. Depuis la seconde moitié du seizième siècle, les ulama chiites les plus influents étaient nommés *shaykhulislāms* des villes iraniennes les plus importantes, devenant ainsi les représentants officiels du chiisme. Avec le développement d'Iṣfahān comme capitale de l'empire séfévide, le *shaykhulislām* de la ville en vint à être considéré comme le premier de tous les ulama chiites. Majlisī était ainsi l'alim chiite le plus puissant de son époque. Aucun alim n'avait auparavant concentré autant de pouvoir entre ses mains. Il orienta donc le chiisme dans une direction qui ne s'est pas démentie jusqu'à nos jours.⁵

Les trois domaines où Majlisī fit porter son effort furent conjointement la suppression du soufisme et de la philosophie, la propagation d'une forme codifiée du dogme duodécimain et la suppression du sunnisme et des autres religions. Ceci ne doit pas occulter le fait que des générations d'ulama chiites, avant Majlisī, avaient combattu le soufisme, jusqu'à apparaître comme des persécuteurs de soufis. Majlisī ne fit qu'amplifier un mouvement déjà en cours. Le fait de déclarer hérétiques à la fois le soufisme et la philosophie permettait de se débarrasser des cheikhs soufis, mais aussi des représentants de l'école d'Iṣfahān, influencée par la philosophie grecque, deux courants dont les cheikhs concurrençaient les ulama.

Le processus d'éradication du soufisme s'intensifia et fut mené par

(Paris 1972) iii: *Les Fidèles d'amour. Shī'isme et soufisme*.

⁴ *Al-nā'ib al-^cāmm*, c'est-à-dire «le représentant de l'Imam caché», est un concept central dans la théologie duodécimaine, qui a permis aux ulama chiites d'assumer au cours des siècles une part croissante du pouvoir dévolu aux Imams infaillibles, jusqu'à la revendication moderne directe du pouvoir avec la *wilāyat al-faqīh* de Khomeyni.

⁵ Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī est l'auteur du célèbre recueil de Traditions: *Bihār al-anwār*, 110 volumes (Téhéran 1956-1972). Se référer à Muḥammad Bāqir Khūnsārī, *Rawḍat al-jannāt* (Téhéran 1988), ouvrage qui donne un bon aperçu de l'action de Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī.

tous les successeurs de Majlisī. Le soutien des ulama aux Séfévides conduisit les souverains chiites à persécuter les ennemis des ulama, et parmi eux les cheikhs de confréries soufies. L'aversion chiite pour le soufisme confrérique et une certaine philosophie s'est perpétuée jusqu'à nos jours parmi la majorité des ulama chiites.⁶ "Ils n'occupent leur temps qu'à des superstitions, des manières pompeuses et des activités futiles. Ils ne font que fumer de l'opium dans des salons de thé et écouter les histoires de Rustam (le héros national de la mythologie iranienne) et de Ḥusayn le Kurde (un autre héros mythologique iranien). Ils n'ont d'autre profession que de mendier, d'être des derviches ou de perdre leur temps avec le soufisme", déclare ainsi en 1907 sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm Khalkhālī, pour déplorer l'absence d'esprit d'entreprise des Iraniens.⁷

Le caractère implacable de la condamnation du soufisme par Majlisī a souvent été comparée, à tort, à la démarche d'Ibn Taymiyya.⁸ Car, si Majlisī considérait que le soufisme et l'union avec Dieu sont une hérésie, il intégra toute la puissance émotionnelle du soufisme dans le nouveau chiisme codifié sous sa houlette. Il mit à l'honneur les cérémonies de piété purement chiites: les visites aux tombeaux des Imams, notamment lors des grands pèlerinages, les assemblées de deuil, en commémoration du martyr de Ḥusayn, à l'occasion de ʿĀshūrā, les *shabīhs*, représentations théâtrales du drame de Karbalā, les rites de mortification, comme le *tabīr*, au cours duquel les pénitents se frappent la poitrine et s'infligent des blessures. De même, il insista sur le rôle d'intercesseur des Imams, qui remplissaient ainsi dans le cœur des fidèles la place laissée vacante par les saints des cheikhs soufis.

Toutes les religions révélées ont dû faire face, au cours de leur développement, au fossé séparant un clergé établi, représentant une image austère et lointaine de l'orthodoxie, des appels des mystiques, qui satisfont le besoin d'intercession pour les croyants. Dans le sunnisme, les confréries soufies, qui ont en charge cette dernière sphère, ont parfois eu des difficultés à s'accorder avec l'islam des ulama, à plus forte raison depuis l'émergence du réformisme. Dans le chiisme, le danger existe aussi de cette séparation. Mais, dans la

⁶ Voir la contribution de N. Pourjavady dans le présent livre.

⁷ Said Amir Arjomand, *Authority and Political Culture in Shi'ism* (New York 1988) 343.

⁸ GAL, ii, 541; S ii, 573-4; D.M. Donaldson, *The Shi'ite Religion* (Londres 1933) 303-4; Khūnsārī, *Rawḍat al-jannāt* 118-123; Henry Corbin, *Histoire de la philosophie musulmane* (Paris 1964) i, 44, 57, 102, 181, 184.

mesure où l'imamologie est devenue une part intégrante de la théologie duodécimaine, elle peut absorber le côté émotionnel de la piété populaire. Ainsi, à la différence du sunnisme, le chiisme a admis la poésie et les chants dans les actes dévotionnels. C'est évident dans les *ta'ziyas*, les cérémonies du deuil chiite, et les *rawḍakhānas*, où l'on évoque par des poèmes la tragédie de Karbalā'. La part de l'émotionnel et le sentimentalisme ont bien plus imprégné la culture chiite que ne l'a fait le soufisme pour le sunnisme.

Au dix-huitième siècle, l'Iran connut une réémergence des ordres soufis chiites détruits par Majlisī et qui avaient fui en Inde. Parmi ces ordres, on trouvait notamment les Ni^cmatullāhī, divisés en trois groupes, les Kubrawiyya (et leurs *futuwwas*, sortes de compagnonnages nés de corporations de métiers dans les villes du Khorasan), les Nūrbakhshī (répandus en Iran, en Inde et au Cachemire), les Dhahabī et les Khāksār.⁹ Ces confréries étaient considérées comme une menace pour les ulama chiites, à un moment où ils étaient engagés dans un processus d'affirmation de leur autorité. L'attirance des souverains iraniens pour le soufisme illustrait leur tentative d'échapper à l'emprise des ulama. La réaction des ces derniers fut brutale. En 1729, le *mujtahid* de Kermān, Mullā ^cAbdullāh, fit mettre à mort le cheikh des Ni^cmatullāh, qui recrutait parmi les élites de la famille royale. Wahīd Bihbahānī (1706-1792), qui mena la bataille décisive des *uṣūlīs*¹⁰ contre l'akhbarisme,¹¹ mit un terme à cette timide renaissance. La victoire totale de l'*uṣūlisme* conférait aux *mujtahids* chiites des pouvoirs sans précédent.¹² La lutte des ulama *uṣūlīs* contre les cheikhs soufis fut menée conjointement avec celle contre les *akhbārīs* et, plus tard contre les

⁹ Sur les ordres soufis chiites, voir R. Gramlich, *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens*, iii volumes (Wiesbaden 1965-1981).

¹⁰ L'*uṣūlisme*, ou tendance *mujtahidie*, a imposé l'usage de la raison (*'aql*) et de l'*ijtihād*, réservé aux *mujtahids*, comme principe fondamental de jurisprudence. C'est Bihbahānī qui, à la fin du dix-huitième siècle, mena le combat qui aboutit au triomphe des thèses *uṣūlīs* au sein du clergé chiite.

¹¹ L'akhbarisme était hostile à l'usage de la raison et favorable à un recours direct aux Traditions des Imams (*akhbār*) dans la formulation des avis religieux.

¹² A propos des différents aspects de la lutte entre *uṣūlīs* et *akhbārīs*, se référer à R. Juan Cole, 'Imami Jurisprudence and the Rôle of the Ulama', dans Nikki Keddie, *Religion and Politics in Iran* (Yale University Press 1983); Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought* (London 1982); Momen Moojan, *Introduction to Shi'ī Islam* (London 1985); Gianroberto Scarcia, 'Interno alle controversie tra Akhbārī e Usulī presso gli Imamiti di Persia', *Revista degli Studia Orientali* xxxiii (1958); Corbin, *En islam iranien* iv, 248-252.

shaykhīs,¹³ accusés de soufisme. Il existait, en effet, parmi les *akhbārīs* comme parmi les *shaykhīs*, une attirance indéniable pour le soufisme. Les soufis se défendirent en affirmant qu'ils représentaient une importante tradition au sein du chiisme, y compris chez les ulama séfévides, et qu'ils n'étaient pas un cheval de Troie sunnite.¹⁴ Mais les ulama *uṣūlīs* persécutèrent les cheikhs soufis jusqu'à leur disparition. Le fils de Bihbahānī reçut ainsi même le surnom de *ṣūfīkush* ("le tueur de soufis"), car il en fit, dit-on, exécuter beaucoup.¹⁵ Les soufis furent ensuite mis sur le même plan que les Bābis, les philosophes et les sectes populaires comme les Ahl al-Haqq.¹⁶

Dans les vilayets mésopotamiens de l'empire ottoman, au dix-neuvième siècle, l'audience des confréries soufies ne dépassait pas les milieux citadins sunnites. Les chiites, 75% des Arabes des trois vilayets, leur restèrent totalement imperméables. Il faut y voir le résultat de l'évolution historique du chiisme duodécimain, de façon général, comme de la situation particulière du chiisme en Irak.

L'Irak n'a pas connu, à l'instar de l'Iran voisin, le développement d'ordres soufis chiites. Tandis qu'en Iran, la conversion au chiisme était largement due à l'alliance entre les ulama et la dynastie séfévide, d'origine soufie, en Irak, le chiisme était déjà bien implanté dès l'époque abbasside au centre et au sud du pays. Les princes bouyides (923-1025), qui ont eu une action décisive pour la consolidation des bases du chiisme en Irak, n'étaient pas soufis. Le chiisme irakien est largement moins redevable de relations avec certains ordres soufis que le chiisme en Iran. Et les soufis chiites n'avaient pas, en Mésopotamie, d'antécédents illustres. A l'exception de ʿAbdak, le soufi chiite végétarien des huit/neuvième siècles,¹⁷ il n'y avait guère que l'aventure des sayyids Mushaʿshaʿ,

¹³ Au dix-neuvième siècle, le shaykhisme occupait une position intermédiaire entre l'*uṣūlisme* et l'*akhbārisme* et pouvait être considéré comme une résurgence de l'Ecole d'Iṣfahān (expression utilisée par Henry Corbin pour désigner la lignée de philosophes qui essaïma, au seizième siècle, dans les grandes villes iraniennes parmi les ulama), avec de nettes influences soufies. Voir Corbin, *En islam iranien* iv, 205-300.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Sur l'action des Bihbahānī, père et fils, contre les soufis, voir Hamid Algar, *Religion and State in Iran 1785-1906. The Rôle of the Ulama in the Qajar period* (Berkeley-Los Angeles 1969) 36 et suivantes.

¹⁶ Sur la répression menée par les ulama chiites *uṣūlīs* contre les soufis, voir notamment Algar, *Religion and State* 36 et suivantes.

¹⁷ ʿAbdak est considéré comme un chiite par la majorité des auteurs classiques

dynastie arabe chiite, qui étendit, depuis Ḥuwayza, son pouvoir de Bagdad au Golfe au milieu du quinzième siècle, et dont le soufisme chiite se perpétua jusqu'au dix-septième siècle, qui put réveiller quelque écho.¹⁸ Certes, ^cAllāma al-Ḥillī, aux douzième/treizième siècles, et Ibn Ṭāwūs, au treizième siècle, qui vécurent à Hilla, Najaf, Karbalā³ et Kāzimayn, étaient connus pour leur ascétisme. Par ailleurs, la rupture avec le soufisme avait été consommée par des ulama iraniens, en grande partie en fonction d'enjeux iraniens. Mais les villes saintes d'Irak intégrèrent ce divorce, qui allait dans le sens d'un nouvel élan pour les ulama chiites, et elle le consommèrent, cette fois directement, lors de la bataille décisive entre *uṣūlīs* et *akhbārīs*, qui fut menée depuis Najaf au dix-neuvième siècle par les partisans de Bihbahānī. C'est à Najaf que s'installa le premier *marji^c al-taqlīd*, Murtaḍā Anṣārī (1799-1864). C'est lui qui codifia la forme moderne du chiisme, inspirée des principes imposés par Bihbahānī: désormais, l'imitation d'un "mujtahid" vivant devenait une obligation pour les croyants.¹⁹

L'émergence du *marji^c al-taqlīd* a interdit toute autre forme de légitimité religieuse dans la zone chiite d'Irak. Le chiisme en Irak est, en effet, marqué par la présence de quatre des villes saintes chiites, lieu de résidence d'une hiérarchie religieuse de plus en plus combattive, dont le rôle a été dissuasif pour d'éventuels concurrents au pouvoir croissant des ulama chiites. L'Irak connu, tout au long du dix-neuvième siècle et à l'instar de l'Iran, une lutte féroce menée par les ulama chiites contre le bābisme et contre le shaykhisme, plus ou moins assimilé au soufisme.²⁰

Par ailleurs, le mysticisme chiite autour des tombeaux des Imams a

musulmans. On sait peu de choses à son sujet. Ses disciples, la ^cAbdakiyya, professaient qu'en l'absence d'un imam juste, le monde avait sombré dans la corruption généralisée, ce qui rendait licite l'appropriation des biens dont on pouvait avoir besoin pour subsister, par quelque moyen que ce soit.

¹⁸ Le parcours religieux de la dynastie des sayyids Musha^csha^c dans le sud de l'Irak est parallèle à celui des Séfévides en Iran. Comme les Séfévides, les sayyids Musha^csha^c sont passés de l'extrémisme (*ghuluww*) d'un soufisme chiite à une orthodoxie duodécimaine affirmée. Leur ancienne capitale, Huwayza, devint au dix-septième siècle un centre important d'enseignement du dogme duodécimain.

¹⁹ Le rôle de Murtaḍā Anṣārī et les détails du dogme qu'il codifia sont décrits dans Algar, *Religion and State in Iran*, et Cole, 'Imami Jurisprudence', dans Keddie, *Religion and Politics in Iran*.

²⁰ Sur la répression du bābisme et du shaykhisme par les ulama chiites en Irak, voir ^cAli al-Wardī, *Lamaḥāt ijtīmā'īyya min tārīkh al-^cIrāq al-ḥadīth* (London 1992) i, 201-8. Sur les liens entre le soufisme et le shaykhisme, voir Corbin, *En islam iranien* iv, Livre vi, L'école shaykhie.

largement comblé le vide qui aurait pu résulter de la disparition nominale du soufisme dans la religion populaire chiite. Le calendrier chiite est jalonné de nombreuses fêtes et commémorations. La plupart de ces manifestations, dont l'origine remonte à l'époque bouyide (923-1055), avaient été remises à l'honneur sous les Séfévides et n'avaient cessé de prendre de l'importance. Les rites chiites datent du seizième siècle et sont, pour la plupart, d'origine soufie iranienne.²¹ Ce n'est qu'après qu'ils furent exportés en Irak. Le *tatbīr* fut introduit en Irak par des pèlerins azéris et caucasiens au début du dix-huitième siècle.²²

Le chiisme irakien, davantage exposé au rayonnement des villes saintes que le chiisme iranien, n'a pas eu à lutter contre la concurrence des confréries chiites. Les conceptions anti-confrériques ne servirent ici qu'à légitimer un combat visant à élargir l'autorité des *ulama* contre d'autres courants du chiisme.

Enfin, la conversion massive au chiisme, entamée depuis le dix-septième siècle, des tribus arabes du centre et du sud de l'Irak ne laissait aucune chance à des ordres soufis assimilés à des pouvoirs sunnites honnis successifs. Une majorité de la population chiite irakienne d'aujourd'hui s'est, en effet, constituée à partir de vagues migratoires successives de tribus arabes en provenance de la Péninsule arabique. Ce mouvement s'est poursuivi jusqu'au dix-neuvième siècle.²³ Ces tribus étaient, à l'origine, toutes sunnites. La conversion au chiisme a correspondu à l'asservissement de tribus bédouines en voie de sédentarisation, face aux tribus de grands chameliers, les aristocrates du désert demeurés attachés au rite sunnite. Le chiisme irakien demeura majoritairement rural et tribal jusqu'au milieu du vingtième siècle. Il était ainsi fortement teinté de valeurs bédouines. L'image de Ḥusayn, le troisième Imam chiite infaillible, est une bonne illustration de cette différence essentielle

21 Ja'far Khayyāt et Ja'far al-Khalilī, *Mawsū'at al-'atabāt al-muqaddasa, qism al-Najaf* (Baghdad et Beyrouth 1965) 222-4, 236-8; Jamīl al-Ṭā'ī, *al-Zūrkhāna al-baghdādiyya* (Baghdad 1986); Ṭālib al-Sharqī, *al-Najaf al-ashraf, 'ādātuhā wa-taqāliduhā* (Najaf 1978) 220-3, 232-253; Elizabeth Fernea, *Guests of the Sheikh: An Ethnography of an Iraqi Village* (New York 1969) 113, 203-6; Gustav E. Thaïs, *Religious Symbolism and Social Change: The Drama of Husain*, Ph.D. Diss., Université de Washington 1973; al-Wardī, *Lamaḥāt* i, 912, 56-78; ii, 109-11.

22 Le *tatbīr* est l'autoflagellation des pénitents lors des séances de mortification de 'Āshūrā'. Voir Yitzhak Nakash, 'An Attempt to Trace the Origin of the Rituals of 'Āshūrā', *Die Welt des Islams* xxxiii (1993) 161-81.

23 Voir à ce sujet 'Alī al-Wardī, *Dirāsa fī ṭabī'at al-mujtama' al-'irāqī* (Baghdad 1965), et *Lamaḥāt* i, 17-32.

entre le chiisme iranien, imprégné de soufisme, et le chiisme irakien, qui exprime avant tout des valeurs bédouines arabes: en Iran, Husayn est un saint mystique et rédempteur, en Irak, il est l'archétype de la virilité, un héros courageux qui allie fierté, honneur et esprit chevaleresque. Ces valeurs, ainsi que la permanence d'un semi-nomadisme, étaient peu propices au développement d'infrastructures religieuses quelles qu'elles soient. Le chiisme s'imposait aussi contre le gouvernement de la Porte, dont les grandes villes étaient les points d'ancrage. Sièges d'une autorité perçue comme irrémédiablement hostile à l'indépendance des tribus, ces villes symbolisaient, pour la masse paysans tribaux, la source de tous leurs maux. Les confréries soufies, dont l'influence se limitait à une partie de la population citadine, avaient donc un environnement radicalement différent de celui de la masse des tribus rurales. L'intégration des confréries au pouvoir sunnite ottoman les faisait assimiler aux yeux des paysans chiites à des élites lointaines au service d'un pouvoir étranger et despotique.

Le soufisme chiite en Irak se limita, avec l'arrivée des Ottomans, aux Bektashis,²⁴ assimilés aux Turcs par les Arabes et à des *ghulāt* par les duodécimains, à quelques Qalandar, et aux Ahl al-Ḥaqq, en majorité Kurdes, dont les liens avec le chiisme sont lointains. "Soufi", en Irak, signifie "sunnite" avec tout ce que cela implique dans un pays majoritairement chiite soumis à des siècles de domination sunnite. Le soufisme a donc totalement disparu de l'Irak chiite, où paradoxalement il survit comme attitude à travers le chiisme qui l'a condamné, davantage que dans les confréries elles-mêmes.

On ne peut parler de l'opposition aux confréries soufies en Irak, sans évoquer leur insertion particulière dans une société où les sunnites sont minoritaires, mais où la Porte a appliqué le même système politique que dans les provinces de l'empire à majorité sunnite. Sur les rives du Tigre et de l'Euphrate, les ulama sunnites et les chefs de confréries soufies furent considérés, à l'instar de ceux d'Égypte ou de Syrie, comme les relais locaux du pouvoir ottoman.

Des trois capitales de vilayet de la Mésopotamie ottomane, Basra, Baghdad, et Mosul, les deux dernières étaient les principaux lieux de concentration des musulmans sunnites; et toutes les trois étaient le

²⁴ La Bektashiyya a perdu tous ses tekkés en Irak en 1914; voir 'Abbās al-ʿAzzāwi, *Taʾriḫ al-ʿIrāq bayn iḥtilālāyn* (Baghdad 1955) iv, 152-156.

siège de leurs directions religieuses et politiques. Les ulama sunnites et les notables y appartenaient souvent à des familles d'*ashrāf* et de sayyids et héritaient de père en fils de fonctions liées à leur famille. Certains chefs religieux sunnites descendaient donc d'un saint musulman ou encore dirigeaient une confrérie. La plupart étaient d'importants propriétaires terriens.²⁵

A Baghdad, qui était toujours restée la capitale d'une province et le siège de l'autorité gouvernementale, quelques familles d'*ashrāf* et de sayyids monopolisaient le leadership religieux et social. Ces familles appartenaient au rite ḥanafite, celui de l'État, et c'est parmi elles que le pouvoir nommait les muftis ḥanafites et chaféites, le *naqīb*, le chef des *ashrāf*, qui occupait une position prééminente dans la direction religieuse de chaque ville, et le *nā'ib*, le *qāḍī* officiel. Depuis 1531, les al-Jilānī fournissaient les chefs (*naqībs*) des *ashrāf* de Baghdad. Ils avaient ainsi la haute main sur les institutions islamiques, l'enseignement religieux et les *waqfs*. La fortune de la famille al-Jilānī provenait pour l'essentiel des *waqfs* dont elle avait la gestion. Les *ashrāf* sunnites étaient, cependant, peu nombreux et devaient faire l'objet d'une reconnaissance officielle de la Porte. En 1894, l'annuaire du vilayet de Baghdad publiait une liste officielle, selon laquelle il y avait à Baghdad vingt-et-un *ashrāf* se répartissant parmi cinq familles seulement: seize pour les seuls al-Jilānī, la plus riche et la plus influente de Baghdad, deux pour les Jamīl, un pour les al-Ālūsī, un pour les Sinawī et un pour les Ḥaydarī.²⁶ La liste ne mentionnait pas d'autres familles célèbres de Baghdad, comme les Suwaydī, les Tabaqshalī, ou celle de Rajab al-Rāwī;²⁷ en ce qui concerne les deux dernières, probablement à cause de leur appartenance à la Rifā'iyya, confrérie rivale de la Qādiriyya, dirigée par les puissants al-Jilānī. A Basra, deux familles accaparaient le pouvoir politique et religieux. Les al-Naqīb, la famille la plus fortunée et la plus puissante de la région, parmi lesquels était

²⁵ Sur le rôle politique de ces familles, voir Pierre-Jean Luizard, *La formation de l'Irak contemporain, le rôle politique des ulémas chiites à la fin de la domination ottomane et au moment de la création de l'État irakien* (Paris 1991) 84, 87-8, 102, 103, 105, 429, 433.

²⁶ La liste officielle des familles des *ashrāf* sunnites de Baghdad est donnée dans *Sālnāma-i Wilāyat-i Baghdād* 1894. Sur la caste des sayyids et *ashrāf* en Irak à l'époque ottomane, voir Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton 1982), le chapitre 7 consacré aux *Sāda*, 153-74.

²⁷ La Rifā'iyya à Baghdad était l'objet d'une concurrence entre les Tabaqshalī et les Rāwī, chacune de ces deux familles visant le contrôle de la confrérie à Baghdad.

traditionnellement nommé le chef des *ashrāf*.²⁸ Enfin, il y avait les Bāsha^ʿiyān, descendants d'un derviche afghan, qui contrôlait la quartier al-Mishrāq à Basra par l'intermédiaire d'un réseau de mosquées.²⁹ A Mosul, le leadership social et religieux se répartissait entre deux familles: les Jalīlī, d'origine chrétienne,³⁰ et les ʿUmarī, une famille d'*ashrāf* dont le pouvoir religieux était sans partage sur la ville.³¹

Comme dans les autres provinces ottomanes, les ulama sunnites d'Irak étaient, au dix-neuvième siècle, tous imprégnés de soufisme. Dans la partie arabe des trois vilayets de la Mésopotamie ottomane, trois confréries s'étaient acquises une influence importante: la Rifā^ʿiyya, la Qādiriyya et, dans une moindre mesure, la Naqshbandiyya. Deux familles, les al-Jilānī, à Baghdad, et les al-Naqīb, à Basra, y monopolisaient le leadership soufi. A Baghdad, la famille al-Jilānī dirigeait la Qādiriyya, le mausolée de ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī dans le quartier de Bāb al-Shaykh attirant une foule de pèlerins de l'ensemble du monde musulman. A la fonction de *naqīb al-ashrāf* acquise à leur famille depuis le seizième siècle, les al-Jilānī ajoutèrent celle de *nāẓir* des *waqfs* de la Qādiriyya au début du dix-neuvième siècle. A Basra, la famille al-Naqīb bénéficiait de privilèges similaires.³² Revendiquant une filiation d'Aḥmad al-Rifā^ʿī, dont le tombeau se trouve au nord de Basra, les al-Naqīb, dirigés à la fin du dix-neuvième siècle par Rajab al-Naqīb, puis, au début du vingtième siècle, par son fils, jouissaient de l'héritage de la confrérie Rifā^ʿiyya, pour les *waqfs* de laquelle ils obtinrent la fonction de *nāẓir*. A Baghdad, la Rifā^ʿiyya existait également, avec trois principales familles, les al-Rāwī, les Āl al-Shaykh al-Qamr et les Tabaqshalī, parmi lesquelles étaient choisis les cheikhs de la Rifā^ʿiyya pour la ville.³³ Les Tabaqshalī ont fourni plusieurs muftis à Baghdad, au début du dix-neuvième siècle.³⁴

²⁸ Public Record Office, London, F.O. 'Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdad and Kādhimain) 1920', 93-4.

²⁹ Ibid. 25.

³⁰ Public Record Office, London, F.O. (Confidential), 'Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkuk and Sulaymanīyah', 98.

³¹ Ibid. 98.

³² Carsten Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arabie et en d'autres pays circonvoisins* (Amsterdam 1780) n ii, 176, 263.

³³ Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī, *al-Misk al-adḥfar* (Baghdad 1930) i, 89-90; Yūnus al-Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Sāmarrāʿī, *al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī. Ḥayātuhu wa-āthāruhu* (Baghdad 1970) 89-110.

³⁴ al-Ālūsī, *al-Misk* 90.

Les cheikhs des mosquées, les écoles religieuses, les chefs de quartiers et des *aṣṇāf*, les corporations, formaient la base sociale de ces familles. Quant aux relations qu'elles entretenaient avec les tribus sunnites en dehors des villes, elles étaient limitées et très fluctuantes. Leur pouvoir était d'abord à l'intérieur des villes. Cette élite locale préférait une bureaucratie turque médiocre et déficiente, qui obligeait la Porte à se reposer sur eux. C'était là une cause de leur conservatisme proverbial.³⁵

Les grandes familles de notables, de sayyids et d'ulama sunnites avaient bénéficié pendant des siècles d'un statut privilégié. Leurs activités économiques et financières leur avait permis d'acquérir des fortunes importantes, contribuant encore au renforcement de leur base sociale. Les chefs religieux avaient le monopole de l'enseignement et ils détenaient le pouvoir de façonner l'opinion populaire à leur convenance. Mais leurs positions avaient été menacées à partir de la liquidation des Mamlūks en 1831 par l'armée ottomane. Conséquence de la politique de centralisation, les nouveaux valis avaient entrepris de renforcer l'autorité du gouvernement, ce qui ne pouvait se faire qu'au détriment des dirigeants locaux. L'autorité de ces derniers, jusqu'alors indiscutée, commença peu à peu à être remise en question. Certains valis tentèrent même de soumettre les sayyids à un impôt spécial.³⁶ Dans le but de recouvrer leur prestige et leur influence, tout en diminuant le rôle politique de ces familles, les valis encouragèrent la promotion de certains sayyids et ulama à des fonctions officielles, ce qui permettait à ces derniers de s'enrichir au service du gouvernement.

L'objectif des autorités ottomanes était d'intégrer définitivement les directions sunnites locales à l'appareil de gouvernement ottoman, politique également suivie à la même époque dans toutes les autres provinces de l'empire. Les sayyids qui désiraient conserver leur indépendance par rapport au gouvernement, comme cheikh Abū'l-Thanā' al-Ālūsī, se virent évincés des fonctions qu'ils occupaient.³⁷ Menacés dans leur autonomie, certes déjà toute relative, notables et ulama sunnites durent également affronter une conjoncture économique défavorable. Une certaine récession, avec la stagnation des importations de produits indiens, affectait alors les trois vilayets.

³⁵ Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī, *Tārīkh masājīd Baghdād wa-āthārihā* (Baghdad 1927) 26.

³⁶ al-ʿAzzāwī, *Tārīkh al-ʿIrāq* vii, 50, 273; viii, 164.

³⁷ Abū'l-Thanā' al-Ālūsī, *Gharāʾib al-ightirāb wa-nuzhat al-albāb* (Baghdad 1909) 15-6, 24-5, 127; al-Wardī, *Lamahāt* ii, 100-3.

La caste des sayyids réagit en prenant la tête des principaux mouvements urbains du dix-neuvième siècle. Les grandes familles des Jamīl, al-Jilānī, al-Ālūsī, Ḥaydarī et al-Naqīb opposèrent ainsi une résistance larvée au gouvernement ottoman,³⁸ jusqu'à l'avènement du sultan Abdülhamit, qui leur permit un rétablissement de leurs privilèges, mais dans des conditions qui les liaient irrémédiablement à l'Etat ottoman.³⁹ Cette intégration définitive des directions religieuses sunnites à l'Etat ottoman se passait au moment où la direction religieuse chiite, après la victoire des *uṣūlīs*, agissait de plus en plus en tant qu'autorité religieuse et politique indépendante des Etats, et prenait la tête d'un mouvement hostile à la domination européenne qui menaçait les pays musulmans.

En dépit des tentatives de Midhat Pacha de briser le monopole des ulama sur le plan de l'éducation, en inaugurant de nombreuses écoles gouvernementales, la position des sayyids et des ulama s'améliora, en effet, de façon notable, sous le règne hamidien.⁴⁰ La nouvelle politique manifestait un intérêt marqué pour l'application de la sharia et le soutien aux ulama et aux sayyids. Parmi ceux-ci, les chefs de confréries soufies furent les grands bénéficiaires du nouveau régime. Abdülhamit, qui était, dit-on, un adepte de la Shādhiliyya, devait exprimer à maintes reprises le respect qu'il vouait aux cheikhs des *tūruq* et à leur famille.⁴¹

L'influence des chefs de confréries soufies fut illustrée par les relations étroites que Maḥmūd Abū'l-Shāmāt, cheikh de la Shādhiliyya de Damas, entretenait avec le sultan. Le *murshid* de la Rifā'iyya d'Alep, Muḥammad Abū'l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī, qui eut une influence déterminante sur la politique de la Porte, entreprit une tournée dans les vilayets de Mésopotamie. Grâce à sa position proche du sultan, il était en mesure d'exercer la plus efficace des protections. Rajab al-Naqīb, le *naqīb al-ashraf* de Basra, vit sa position renforcée. Mais c'est son fils, Ṭālib, qui exploita certainement le mieux ses bonnes relations avec cheikh Abū'l-Hudā

³⁸ Batatu, *The Old Social Classes* 166, 168-9.

³⁹ al-ʿAzzāwī, *Tārīkh al-ʿIrāq* vii, 14-17, 50, 31, 119, 273; ʿAbbās al-ʿAzzāwī, *Dhikrā Abī'l-Thanāʿ al-Ālūsī* (Baghdad 1958) 53-6; Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī, *Aʿlām al-ʿIrāq* (Le Caire 1926) 100-1; Abū'l-Thanāʿ al-Ālūsī, *Gharāʾib* 127; ʿAbd al-Karīm al-ʿAllāf, *Baghdād al-qadīma* (Baghdad 1960) 22.

⁴⁰ Sur la politique hamidienne envers les sayyids sunnites d'Irak, voir Tawfiq al-Suwaydī, *Wujūh ʿabra al-tārīkh* (London 1987) 28, 34-9, 159-61; ʿAlī al-Wardī, *Lamaḥāt* iii, 62-72.

⁴¹ al-Wardī, *Lamaḥāt* iii, 12-34.

al-Şayyādī. Il obtint un salaire équivalent à celui d'un ministre, fut nommé *mutaşarrif* du liva du Ḥasā, dépendant du vilayet de Basra, qu'il géra comme si c'était sa propriété privée. Les gens d'al-Ḥasā s'étant plaint auprès de la Porte, il fut finalement relevé de ses fonctions.⁴² A Baghdad, le cheikh de la Qādiriyya, Salmān al-Jilānī, vit également sa position renforcée. Un firman du sultan, en 1879, exemptait les al-Jilānī du service militaire, en même temps qu'il faisait de cheikh al-Jilānī un conseiller du vali et un membre permanent du *majlis idāra* de Baghdad.⁴³ Un autre firman impérial attribua aux *waqfs* de la Qādiriyya, que les al-Jilānī administraient, certains impôts normalement prélevés au bénéfice de l'Etat. Cheikh Salmān rechercha l'appui de ceux qui, auprès du sultan, favorisaient les confréries soufies. Parmi eux, al-Ḥājj °Alī Pacha, un membre de la Qādiriyya proche du sultan, devint l'intermédiaire adéquat pour l'obtention de toutes les faveurs, titres et distinctions voulues par les al-Jilānī. Parmi ces faveurs, il y avait l'attribution d'un dixième des terres du sultan (*mīris*) en Irak aux *waqfs* qādiris. Les *waqfs* qādiris les faisaient fructifier, comme s'ils en étaient le propriétaire, sans aucun contrôle.⁴⁴ Que cheikh al-Jilānī réclame un salaire supérieur, il en informait al-Ḥājj °Alī Pacha qui, aussitôt, lui attribuait un salaire de ministre. Le cheikh de la Qādiriyya de Baghdad demanda la même chose pour son frère, l'obtint, puis un salaire minimum pour tous les membres de sa famille. Quand sayyid Salmān mourrut, il fut remplacé par son frère °Abd al-Rahmān, à la tête d'une immense fortune.⁴⁵ Ces privilèges exorbitants sont demeurés attachés à l'image peu flatteuse qu'ont aujourd'hui nombre d'Irakiens sunnites de cette famille.⁴⁶ Mais, les al-Jilānī, s'ils étaient les principaux bénéficiaires de la politique d'Abdülhamit, n'en étaient pas les seuls. Ainsi, les Āl al-Qamr et les al-Rāwī, qui dirigeaient la Rifā°iyya de Baghdad, furent également exemptés du service militaire sur décision du sultan Abdülhamit, entre autres privilèges.⁴⁷

En tant que dirigeants de l'infrastructure religieuse dans les

⁴² al-Suwaydī, *Wujūh* 159-60.

⁴³ Ibrāhīm al-Durūbī, *al-Baghdādiyyūn. Akhbāruhum wa-majālisuhum* (Baghdad 1958) 283; al-Suwaydī, *Wujūh* 34.

⁴⁴ Batatu, op. cit. 169.

⁴⁵ al-Suwaydī, op. cit. 34-5.

⁴⁶ Le portrait brossé par Tawfiq al-Suwaydī (*Wujūh* 34-9) de Sayyid °Abd al-Rahmān al-Jilānī, *naqib al-ashraf* de Baghdad et cheikh de la Qādiriyya, et de sa famille, en est une bonne illustration.

⁴⁷ al-Durūbī, op. cit. 282-3; et al-Wardī, *Lamahāt* ii, 146.

vilayets, ulama et chefs de confréries soufies constituaient la caste privilégiée sur laquelle se reposait le sultan pour appliquer sa politique panislamiste et de revivification de la fonction califale. La décision d'Abdülhamit de former une assemblée spéciale pour les cheikhs de "ṭarīqāt", dont les membres recevaient des appointements, illustre bien leur intégration à l'appareil d'Etat. Ceux qui, parmi les ulama sunnites, refusèrent cette intégration le payèrent chèrement. Lors de son séjour à Bagdad, cheikh Abū'l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī avait tenté de gagner cheikh Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī à la Rifā'iyya, mais en vain.⁴⁸ Cheikh al-Ālūsī dut alors affronter l'hostilité du puissant "murshid", un adversaire acharné des wahhabites vers lesquels allaient justement les sympathies d'al-Ālūsī.⁴⁹ Sur le plan économique, la situation des notables et des ulama sunnites revint à une certaine prospérité, avec la pénétration commerciale croissante des puissances européenne, qui relançaient des transactions dont ils bénéficiaient indirectement. L'introduction de la vie moderne ne heurta pas l'establishment religieux et social des vilayets dans la mesure où il en était le bénéficiaire. Sayyids et ulama sunnites se mirent, ainsi, à la fin du dix-neuvième siècle, à envoyer leurs fils dans les écoles ottomanes,⁵⁰ et ils finirent par se considérer comme faisant partie de l'aristocratie au service des Ottomans. A l'instar des élites éduquées dans les institutions ottomanes, les enfants des chefs religieux sunnites devaient, à leur tour, se faire les vecteurs de la culture occidentale.

La révolution jeune-turque inaugura une période difficile pour les directions religieuses sunnites locales. La restauration de la Constitution en 1908 ne fut pas bien accueillie par les élites urbaines des trois vilayets mésopotamiens. Le lien religieux avec le sultan-calife, qui était à la base de leur position privilégiée, se trouva affaibli, tandis que le nouveau régime tentait d'établir une domination turque directe. Dès leur arrivée au pouvoir, les unionistes s'attachèrent à réduire le rôle des sayyids, *ashrāf* et autres représentants du pouvoir religieux local. La meilleure illustration en est l'annulation de leur immunité financière et le fait que les sayyids

⁴⁸ Sur la vindicte du cheikh Abū'l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī contre cheikh Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī et sa famille, voir al-ʿAzzāwī, *Dhikrā*; Sulaymān Fayḍī, *Fī ghamrat al-niḍāl* (Baghdad 1952) 56; Muḥammad Bahjat al-Athari, *Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī wa-ārāʾuhu al-lughawiyya* (Le Caire 1957) 82-3; Batatu, op. cit. 169.

⁴⁹ al-ʿAzzāwī, *Dhikrā*, chapitre 4.

⁵⁰ Voir le chapitre sur les *Sāda* in Batatu, op. cit.

se virent interdire l'accès aux plus hautes fonctions.⁵¹ Tous les *waqfs* qui avaient échappé jusque là au contrôle du gouvernement, et qui étaient administrés au bénéfice exclusif des familles qui en avaient la charge, se virent soumis à l'impôt.⁵² Ceci s'appliquait en particulier aux *waqfs* de la Qādiriyya.⁵³ Parfois, le gouvernement prit même possession des *waqfs* des confréries. Les Jeunes-Turcs évincèrent les membres des grandes familles de leurs fonctions officielles. °Abd al-Rahmān al-Jilānī fut ainsi écarté de la direction de la municipalité de Bagdad. A Basra, la situation était quelque peu différente. La révolution ottomane avait ramené Ṭālib al-Naqīb, désormais Pacha, dans sa ville, où il annonça son soutien au *Comité Union et Progrès* (C.U.P. après). Il partit pour Istanbul, comme représentant de Basra à la Chambre ottomane (*Majlis al-mab'ūthīn*). Mais les ambitions démesurées du puissant notable de Basra aboutirent rapidement à une rupture avec les unionistes.⁵⁴

Les tentatives des unionistes de s'opposer à la direction religieuse des grandes villes furent l'une des causes de la création des associations ottomanes d'opposition. La répression contre les ulama et l'emprisonnement de certains d'entre eux ne fit que renforcer l'hostilité des grandes familles sunnites aux Jeunes-Turcs. L'attitude méfiante des chefs sunnites locaux envers les Jeunes-Turcs au moment de leur arrivée au pouvoir se transforma rapidement en hostilité déclarée et les sayyids sunnites grands propriétaires terriens prirent la tête de l'opposition au C.U.P.⁵⁵

Les élites citadines sunnites avaient d'abord manifesté une opposition larvée à la révolution jeune-turque, attaquant les constitutionnalistes au nom d'une conception conservatrice de l'islam. La proclamation de l'égalité et de la fin des privilèges des musulmans étaient sciemment exploitées par les ulama pour présenter les Jeunes-Turcs comme des impies. Au-delà de leurs appels en faveur du sultan Abdülhamit et de leurs mots d'ordre pour un

⁵¹ Public Record Office, London. F.O., 'Further Correspondance Respecting the Affairs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia octobre à décembre 1908', 50-3, 102, et 107; et Batatu, op. cit. 170.

⁵² Public record Office, London, F.O., '(Secret) Intelligence Report No. 24 of 27 November 1924', para. 732.

⁵³ Ibid.; et Batatu, op. cit. 170.

⁵⁴ al-Suwaydī, *Wujūh* 160-1; al-Wardī, *Lamahāt* iii, 209-11.

⁵⁵ Sur l'hostilité aux Jeunes-Turcs de la plupart des sayyids et ulama sunnites d'Irak, se référer à Tawfīq al-Suwaydī, *Mudhakkarātī. Tārīkh al-°Irāq wa'l-°qādiyya al-°arabiyya* (Beyrouth 1969); Ghassān °Aṭīya, 'Iraq, 1908-1921, A Political Study' (Beyrouth 1973); al-°Azzāwī, *Tārīkh al-°Irāq*, volumes vii et viii (Baghdad 1956).

retour au régime de la sharia, c'étaient bien les craintes d'un grand nombre d'ulama et de notables sunnites de voir s'effondrer leur rôle et leur position sociale, qui furent la principale raison de leur opposition aux unionistes. L'élite soufie se tourna alors vers des conceptions conservatrices hostiles aux Jeunes-Turcs. A Bagdad, le *Lajnat al-mashwara* regroupa au début cette opposition. Le *Lajnat al-mashwara* et, à sa suite, le *Hizb al-ḥurr al-muʿtadil*, étaient des partis conservateurs qui avaient pour pilier la famille al-Jilānī. Le premier avait fait du refus de l'égalité entre les confessions et du retour à la sharia son mot d'ordre contre les unionistes. Le *Lajnat al-mashwara* avait des mots d'ordre religieux. S'il affirmait ne pas être hostile à la Constitution, il ne proposait rien d'autre que le respect de la sharia. Cheikh Muḥammad Saʿīd en fut membre. Ce cheikh Naqshbandī était le cheikh soufi arabe le plus populaire de l'Irak (tous les cheikhs naqshbandis arabes seront par la suite ses élèves).⁵⁶ Réputé pour sa science, il fut enseignant à l'institut religieux de la mosquée de Sāmarrāʾ fondé par Abdülhamit, puis prédicateur à la mosquée Abū Ḥanīfa à Bagdad. Cette opposition religieuse devait évoluer, après l'amenuisement des activités du *Lajnat al-mashwara*, autour duquel elle s'était cristallisée, vers la revendication du respect des droits des Arabes et d'une représentation plus équilibrée des Arabes dans les organes du pouvoir, ainsi que de l'utilisation de l'arabe dans l'administration et les écoles. Maḥmūd al-Jilānī, le fils de ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, le plus farouche opposant aux Jeunes-Turcs à Bagdad, n'hésita pas à mettre en avant des mots d'ordre nationalistes, qu'il considérait comme plus efficaces que les arguments strictement religieux contre les Jeune-Turcs. Des ulama et des *ashrāf* sunnites de Bagdad en vinrent à soutenir *al-Nādī al-waṭanī* (le Club patriotique), dont les mots d'ordre étaient nationalistes et laïcs. La facilité avec laquelle les chefs religieux sunnites troquèrent les mots d'ordre religieux du début de leur lutte contre le C.U.P. pour d'autres, qui s'inspiraient plus directement de la défense des droits des Arabes et de l'autonomisme, illustre bien le caractère conjoncturel de la conscience islamique qui avait alors semblé les animer.

A Basra, l'opposition au C.U.P. fut moins forte, car le monopole de Ṭālib Pacha, le chef de la Rifāʿiyya, sur les partis d'opposition la

⁵⁶ Pour sa biographie voir Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Suhrawardī, *Lubb al-albāb* (Bagdad 1933) ii, 270-80. Voir également Yūnus Ibrāhīm al-Sāmarrāʾī, *Tārīkh ʿulamāʾ Sāmarrāʾ* (Bagdad 1966) 47.

canalisait dans un sens modéré. Ṭālīb Pacha opta, pour sa part, pour l'autonomisme arabe. Il fonda, en 1912, la *Jamʿiyyat al-Baṣra al-islāhiyya* (l'Association réformiste de Basra), qui prônait une décentralisation de l'empire.⁵⁷ De tous les partis politiques d'opposition, ce fut celui qui symbolisa, mieux que tout autre, la revendication de l'autonomie arabe. Mais cela ne signifiait pas l'autonomie de la nation arabe ou du peuple irakien. Car derrière les appels de Ṭālīb à l'autodétermination, au réformisme, au non centralisme, et à un certain nombre d'idées "modernes" (aidées en cela par ses contacts avec les Britanniques), il y avait ses ambitions personnelles et l'espoir que Basra devienne un émirat indépendant à l'image de Koweït ou de l'émirat de Muḥammara dirigé par cheikh Khazʿal. La demande d'autonomie arabe n'était pas seulement motivée par le désir de défendre l'identité culturelle arabe et l'islam face aux Turcs laïcisés. C'était aussi la volonté de préserver des institutions sociales avec tous les privilèges qui y étaient attachés. Pourtant, ces associations sont considérées aujourd'hui par l'histoire officielle irakienne comme les premières manifestations du nationalisme arabe. Lorsque survint l'occupation britannique en 1914, ces partis politiques disparurent tous, sauf *Al-ʿAhd*.⁵⁸

Avec une base principalement composée d'Arabes sunnites, ces courants politiques étaient limités aux villes. A Basra, la base sociale de toutes les organisations patronnées successivement par Ṭālīb Pacha était la même: riches notables arabes, commerçants fortunés et propriétaires terriens. Ils manifestaient avant tout la réaction des classes dirigeantes locales et des élites civiles et militaires face au défi que représentait le mouvement jeune-turc. Au même moment, la direction religieuse chiite, malgré des déchirements internes, avait fait d'al-Najaf et de Karbalāʾ le phare du constitutionnalisme religieux dans les deux empires ottoman et persan, les bonnes relations des Jeunes-Turcs et des ulama chiites se justifiant par le désir commun prêtés par ces derniers aux unionistes de lutter à la fois contre l'absolutisme des souverains et contre les tentatives de domination de l'Europe sur les pays musulmans. Les campagnes tribales, c'est à dire l'immense majorité de la population, n'étaient pas concernées. Les chiites, en particulier, dans les campagnes, mais aussi dans les villes, restèrent à l'écart.

⁵⁷ Sur les partis et associations fondées par les sayyids et ulama sunnites d'Irak contre les Jeunes-Turcs, se référer à ʿAṭīya, *ʿIraq, 1908-1921* 45 et suivantes.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Lors de l'occupation britannique, les élites religieuses locales sunnites se mirent au service du colonisateur et des institutions qu'il mettait en place. Pour les classes aisées des villes, en effet, l'occupation britannique signifiait la sécurité des biens et la garantie du maintien de l'ordre. Certes, les bouleversements intervenus plaçaient les directions religieuses sunnites locales face à un redoutable dilemme. La suprématie des "infidèles" était une réfutation constante d'un passé islamique dont sayyids et *ashrāf* étaient le symbole. L'appel au *jihād*, lancé au début de la guerre par le *shaykhulislām* au nom du calife, n'avait reçu qu'une approbation verbale sans conviction. L'attitude dominante, au moment de la conquête du pays par l'armée britannique, se caractérisait par une absence de réaction. Une fois les dernières possibilités d'un retour des Ottomans évanouies, la grande majorité des chefs religieux sunnites choisit le camp des nouveaux maîtres du pays.

Lorsque la guerre avait éclaté, Ṭālib Pacha était à Istanbul. Il revint à Bagdad pour prendre contact avec les Anglais, encouragé en ce sens par Ibn Sa'ūd et cheikh Khaz'al. Lorsque les Anglais entrèrent dans Basra, Ṭālib se voyait déjà chef d'un émirat indépendant ou même roi d'un futur royaume d'Irak. Après être tardivement revenu à une politique de soutien aux Turcs, Ṭālib Pacha entreprit des marchandages avec les Britanniques, et le puissant notable de Basra, qui s'était fait le héraut de l'autonomie arabe sous les Jeune-Turcs, devint l'un des plus fervents partisans de la présence britannique dans le pays.⁵⁹ A Bagdad, le chef des *ashrāf*, °Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jilānī, fut encore plus explicite, puisqu'il déclara aux Britanniques: 'Je reconnais votre victoire et quand on me demande mon point de vue quant à la perpétuation de la domination de la Grande-Bretagne, je réponds que je suis le sujet du vainqueur'.⁶⁰ Le cheikh de la Qādiriyya de Bagdad, qui devait être le premier chef du gouvernement arabe local mis en place par les autorités d'occupation, fut le plus chaud partisan du mandat britannique.

D'une façon générale, les classes dirigeantes sunnites, ulama, *ashrāf*, chefs de confréries soufies, propriétaires terriens et membre des grandes familles, ainsi que les riches commerçants et les élites militaires et civiles, tous constituèrent ensemble la base sur laquelle

⁵⁹ al-Suwaydī, *Wuḥūh* 161-3. Sur l'attitude des sayyids et ulama sunnites lors de l'occupation britannique, voir 'Aṭīya, 'Iraq, 1908-1921' 56-9, 86-97.

⁶⁰ Arnold T. Wilson, *Mesopotamia, 1917-1920. A Clash of Loyalties* (Londres 1939), annexe iii A: *A Political View of the Naqib of Bagdad*.

se reposa la Grande-Bretagne pour construire l'administration mandataire locale, à partir de laquelle allait naître l'Etat irakien. Les Britanniques, qui cherchaient à contrôler la population par l'intermédiaire de ses dirigeants naturels, trouvèrent dans les sayyids et les *ashrāf* sunnites de précieux alliés. Les ulama sunnites, comme Aḥmad Dāwūd et Yūsuf al-Suwaydī, qui s'opposèrent aux Anglais, ne furent qu'une infime minorité.⁶¹ Ces derniers décidèrent de rejoindre le mouvement patriotique de Baghdad, qui scellait l'alliance entre sunnites et chiïtes, avant d'aller se mettre sous la protection des grands *marji*'s chiïtes à Karbalā' lors de la révolution de 1920. Quant au cheikh naqshbandi Muḥammad Sa'īd, qui dirigea le parti nationaliste arabe *al-ʿAhd* en 1914, il prit position contre les Anglais et fut l'instigateur d'actions contre leur présence.⁶² Mais on sait que le parti *al-ʿAhd*, au-delà d'actions anti-britanniques limitées, prit le parti des Anglais lors des batailles décisives qu'ils menaient contre les chiïtes, que ce soit lors de leur *jihād* en 1915-16 ou lors de la révolution de 1920.⁶³

ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Jilānī n'était pas un homme politique. C'est la raison pour laquelle sir Percy Cox, de retour à Baghdad, le choisit comme chef du gouvernement arabe local,⁶⁴ dont est issu l'Etat irakien moderne. Le résident britannique fut encouragé dans son choix par Ṭālib Pacha, qui convoitait le trône d'Irak. Cependant, devenu premier ministre, ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Jilānī se mit à préparer l'arrivée de Fayṣal, sur lequel les Britanniques avait fixé leur choix comme roi du futur royaume d'Irak. Le premier ministre rompit avec Ṭālib Pacha. Mais l'agent britannique St John Philby, connu pour ses positions anti-chérifiennes et pro-saoudiennes, soutint Ṭālib contre Fayṣal. Ṭālib Pacha fut nommé ministre de l'Intérieur dans le premier cabinet Jilānī, sous l'autorité de St John Philby. Mais, du fait de ses intrigues permanentes contre Fayṣal, le nouveau roi, il fut relevé de ses fonctions et exilé à Ceylan par les Britanniques.

⁶¹ Voir à ce sujet Luizard, *La formation de l'Irak contemporain* 387-92, 441-4, 451-3.

⁶² Public Record Record Office, London, F.O., 'Dossiers de la direction de la sécurité publique de Baghdad, rapports de la police irakienne (Major J. F. Wilkins), (Confidential) Personalities, Baghdad and Kādhimain 1920', 72.

⁶³ Sur la politique du parti *al-ʿAhd* envers les Britanniques et le mouvement indépendantiste de l'Irak, voir Luizard, *La formation de l'Irak* 417-8.

⁶⁴ Sur le choix et les fonctions de ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Jilānī comme chef des premiers gouvernements irakiens, voir Luizard, *La formation de l'Irak* 429-62.

Autorisé à revenir à Basra en 1925, il mourut peu après.⁶⁵ Avec lui disparaissait le dernier grand représentant du leadership soufi à Basra.

Le premier gouvernement d'al-Jilānī, du 11 novembre 1920 à septembre 1921, était transitoire. Surtout, il cachait mal le pouvoir absolu du résident britannique. Son second gouvernement fut institué, d'août 1922 à novembre 1922, sous le règne de Fayṣal, mais son pouvoir ne s'accrut pas pour autant. Le premier ministre fut pris entre les exigences des Anglais et les tentatives de Fayṣal de desserrer le carcan britannique. Le maintien au gouvernement d'al-Jilānī était considéré par les chérifiens comme un encouragement aux interventions permanentes du résident britannique. Quand le *naqīb al-ashrāf* de Baghdad comprit que Fayṣal faisait davantage confiance à d'autres, il accepta de se retirer. Sous ses trois cabinets avaient eu lieu les premiers pas dans la mise en place des institutions de la monarchie, qui liaient le nouveau système à la puissance mandataire: l'intronisation de Fayṣal roi d'Irak et la signature du traité anglo-irakien.

Le premier ministre du nouvel Etat irakien sous mandat britannique avait ainsi été le cheikh de la Qādiriyya de Baghdad. Les cheikhs de confréries soufies constituèrent une part importante de la classe dirigeante de la monarchie hachémite. Base locale du pouvoir ottoman avant de se mettre, dans leur grande majorité, au service du colonisateur britannique, les cheikhs de confréries soufies prirent leur part dans la confrontation engagée par la puissance mandataire contre les dirigeants religieux chiites, qui avaient pris la tête du mouvement hostile au mandat et à la Grande-Bretagne et pour l'indépendance complète du pays.

Conscients de leur situation minoritaire, les sunnites d'Irak ont évité de se diviser lors de l'émergence du réformisme. Les partisans des wahhabites ou de Muḥammad ʿAbduh demeurèrent d'ailleurs très peu nombreux. Lorsque Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā vint à Baghdad en 1911, il accepta d'honorer l'hospitalité de cheikh al-Jilānī.⁶⁶ Pourtant, le fondateur d'*Al-Manār* ne s'était pas fait faute de critiquer le soufisme, comme facteur d'arriération des sociétés musulmanes.

Ceux, et ils étaient très peu, parmi les ulama sunnites, qui

⁶⁵ al-Suwaydī, *Wujūh* 162-3.

⁶⁶ al-Wardī, *Lamahāt* iii, 191.

adoptèrent des positions réformistes, comme les membres les plus illustres de la famille al-Ālūsī, ou Muḥammad Faydī al-Zahāwī, furent, de plus, la cible de la répression des autorités ottomanes.⁶⁷ La famille al-Ālūsī eut un rôle prédominant dans la diffusion des idées de la *salafiyya* en Irak. L'influence du soufisme au sein même de cette famille n'avait pas été absente: ainsi, cheikh ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Ālūsī (mort en 1906) enseignait dans les deux confréries Naqshbandiyya et Qādiriyya.⁶⁸ Mais, le premier à exprimer des positions dissonnantes avec celles de l'establishment religieux fut, au dix-neuvième siècle, cheikh Abū'l-Thanāʾ al-Ālūsī. Ses mauvaises relations avec les représentants du pouvoir et leurs protégés, les cheikhs soufis, sont restées célèbres. Le désir d'indépendance des al-Ālūsī par rapport au pouvoir ne pouvait se concilier avec la totale soumission des al-Jilānī à ce même pouvoir. A l'époque des Tanzimat, le vali Najīb Pacha (1842-1847), qui était membre de la Qādiriyya, avait des rapports très tendus avec cheikh Abū'l-Thanāʾ al-Ālūsī, alors mufti de Baghdad.⁶⁹ Ce dernier perdit toutes ses fonctions en 1847.⁷⁰ C'est parmi cette famille, donc, que se trouvaient les partisans les plus actifs de la *salafiyya* en Irak: Nuʿmān al-Ālūsī et Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī. Nuʿmān al-Ālūsī est décrit par Albert Hourani comme "le chef d'un mouvement réformiste islamique qui n'était pas différent du mouvement de Muḥammad ʿAbduh".⁷¹ Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī devint, au début du vingtième siècle, l'un des principaux propagandistes du fondamentalisme. Il fut certainement celui qui alla le plus loin dans son aversion pour les confréries.⁷² Ses œuvres suscitaient des réactions véhémentes des autorités ottomanes qui y voyaient l'influence du wahhabisme, qu'elles s'employaient à combattre dans le Nejd.⁷³ Il y avait l'affront fait à cheikh Abū'l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī et ses sympathies wahhabites. Le sultan penchait pour les confréries soufies, Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī reprenait à son compte les attaques

67 al-ʿAzzāwī, *Dhikrā* 313-4.

68 al-Ālūsī, *al-Misk* 32.

69 al-Wardī, *Lamaḥāt* ii, 146-50.

70 al-Wardī, *Lamaḥāt* ii, 100-6 et al-ʿAzzāwī, *Tārīkh al-ʿIrāq* vii, 83.

71 Albert Hourani, *al-Fikr al-ʿarabī fī ʿaṣr al-Naḥḍa* (Beyrouth 1977) iii, 297-8.

72 al-Atharī, *Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī* 64-72, 74-5.

73 Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī écrivit même une histoire du Nejd [*Tārīkh Najd*, ii. vols. (Le Caire 1343 et 1347) préface de Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī] où il ne cache pas ses sympathies wahhabites.

des wahhabites contre les superstitions⁷⁴: il fut accusé de sédition contre le sultan et reçut en 1904 un ordre d'exil vers l'Anatolie.⁷⁵ Bahjat al-Atharī, un disciple de Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī, écrivit au sujet de son maître:

'Ce siècle n'est pas terminé — c'est-à-dire le treizième siècle de l'hégire — que les gens du pouvoir, dont la politique est de satisfaire les magiciens de la religion et leurs pratiques méprisables, tentent d'attirer à eux la populace, puisant leur force de la bêtise, pour le plus grand plaisir de leur sultan, assouvissant leurs passions et goûtant au plaisir de leur ignorance, par la guerre qu'ils mènent à la science. Alors sont apparus les imposteurs des confréries, ceux qui se parent des habits de la religion pour répandre l'esprit de la corruption, séduire la populace, ceux qui ont derrière eux le pouvoir qui les soutient et renforce leur propagande, au point qu'ils en obtiennent ce qu'ils veulent pour construire des tekkés, des coupoles sur les tombes de cheikhs et de charlatans rifā'is, naqshbandis, qādiris et 'aydarūsīs. Le règne de l'associationnisme et de l'hypocrisie a été glorifié. On a demandé des dons et des offrandes pour les tombes, on a accroché dessus des amulettes, on y a allumé des lampes, de telle sorte que les pieux sont devenus, aux yeux des gens, ceux qui frappent sur des tambours et qui dansent lors des séances de *dhikr*, l'alim, celui qui a une longue barbe, se maquille les yeux au kohl, se bat avec ses longues manches. A côté de cela, l'uléma indépendant, respectable, s'il les critique dans leurs errements, on lui crie: "wahhabite!". On se moque de lui et on se venge de lui avec tout ce que permet le sultan despotique'.

Toujours dans un souci de défense de cheikh al-Ālūsī, il poursuit:

'Al-Ālūsī était au début contraint d'avoir recours à la dissimulation. C'est la raison pour laquelle il a écrit un livre intitulé "Les secrets divins dans l'explication de la poésie rifā'ie", dans lequel il explique un poème d'Abū'l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī où ce dernier loue sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifā'ī. Ayant présenté son livre au sultan, il lui a donné l'autorisation d'enseigner à l'école de sayyid Sultan 'Alī. Cependant, quand al-Ālūsī a été enfin célèbre et que ses partisans et ses disciples sont devenus nombreux, il a arraché le voile de la *taqīyya* et il a commencé à rappeler la nécessité de purifier la religion des innovations, lançant des attaques virulentes contre les superstitions enracinées dans les esprits et les traditions absurdes...Les enturbannés en ont été exaspérés. Eux, aux longues manches et aux manteaux rejetés en arrière, imbus d'eux-mêmes et de leur suffisance, pleins d'ignorance, d'hypocrisie et de tromperie, ils se sont mis à le calomnier dans leurs *ḥaḍras* et à le qualifier de "wahhābī", qui est un mot qui suscite l'aversion du commun des gens, dans la mesure où il est évident que cela leur suggère l'abomination des Prophètes, et l'ennemi de tous les musulmans, qui pille et viole les femmes...'.⁷⁶

Peu originaux, comparés à la littérature alors abondante dans le même sens qu'on pouvait alors rencontrer au Caire ou à Damas, sans

⁷⁴ al-Atharī, *Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī* 82-3.

⁷⁵ al-Wardī, *Lamaḥāt* iii, 69-74; et Fayḍī, *Fī ghamrat al-niḍāl* 56.

⁷⁶ al-Atharī, *A'lām al-'Irāq* 97-101.

parler des anathèmes wahhabites à l'encontre des confréries soufies, ces écrits n'en reflètent pas moins l'âpreté d'un combat qui, s'il fut extrêmement minoritaire en Irak, du fait du souci des sunnites de ne pas se déchirer face aux chiites, n'en était que plus virulent, encore exacerbé par la proximité de la violence wahhabite, dont l'Irak était la cible régulière.

A part les al-Ālūsī, cheikh Muḥammad Fayḍī al-Zahāwī, mufti de Bagdad et père du poète Jamīl Sidqī al-Zahāwī, abordait tous les problèmes du temps, dans ses cercles politiques et religieux, où il se faisait également le défenseur des idées réformistes.⁷⁷ Ces manifestations anti-soufies se sont limitées à des cercles très restreints d'ulama. Lorsque le réformisme touchait les confréries soufies elles-mêmes, il accentua encore leur marque sunnite. Le cheikh soufi kurde réformateur Khālīd al-Baghdādī de qui se réclament aujourd'hui toutes les branches naqshbandies au Kurdistan, dont nombre de cheikhs s'illustrèrent contre les pouvoirs ottomans, n'avait-il pas, au début du dix-neuvième siècle, exprimé la plus sectaire et la plus traditionnelle des visions anti-chiites en vigueur chez les sunnites?⁷⁸ C'est à sa position très minoritaire dans un pays majoritairement chiite que le soufisme confrérique en Irak a été confronté, bien davantage qu'aux critiques réformistes ou à l'influence wahhabite.

Alors que le chiisme figurait une forme de patriotisme local, face aux ottomans, le réformisme était assimilé au mouvement wahhabite, l'ennemi devenu traditionnel de la population du sud de l'Irak, depuis que les Ikhwān multipliaient les raids meurtriers contre ses tribus ou contre les villes saintes chiites. L'une des dernières agressions wahhabites contre l'Irak eut lieu le 11 mars 1922. Les tribus chiites Muntafik et la ville sainte de Karbalā³ furent alors victimes d'une razzia meurtrière de grande envergure.⁷⁹ Ces événements tragiques suscitèrent une violente réaction de l'opinion

⁷⁷ Sur les activités des protagonistes du courant réformiste et fondamentaliste sunnite en Irak ottoman, voir al-ʿAzzāwī, *Dhikrā* 313-4 et al-Atharī, *Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī wa-ārāʾuhū*.

⁷⁸ L'antichiisme de Mawlānā Khālīd, qui se doublait d'une violente antipathie envers les Iraniens, qu'il qualifiait de Perses apostats, fut exprimé à maintes reprises, que ce soit lors de son passage à Téhéran sur la route des Indes, ou à Delhi où il composa une sorte de récit de son voyage, ou encore lors de son séjour à Bagdad où des ulama chiites vinrent le rencontrer avant de renoncer face à son hostilité. Voir Ibrāhīm Faṣīḥ al-Ḥaydarī, *al-Majd al-ṭālid fī manāqib Mawlānā Khālīd* (Istanbul 1875) 33; et Mawlā ʿAbd al-Karīm Mudarris, *Yādī-i mardān, Mawlānā Khālīdī-i Naqshbandī* (Baghdad 1979) 642-3.

⁷⁹ al-Wardī, *Lamaḥāt* vi 132-4, 140-52.

irakienne. Les *mujtahids* chiites accusèrent les Britanniques d'être les véritables instigateurs de ces raids contre les tribus, dans le but de détourner l'opinion publique du problème du traité et de faire pression sur Fayṣal afin qu'il se soumette définitivement aux conditions anglaises. Un immense congrès fut organisé à Karbalā', qui fut l'occasion pour les religieux chiites de proclamer leur refus du mandat et du traité liant l'Irak à la Grande-Bretagne. Le mouvement des Ikhwān wahhabites y apparaissait comme l'"agent des Anglais".⁸⁰ Dans de telles conditions, il était difficile de se réclamer d'une filiation religieuse ou politique avec un mouvement unanimement rejeté dans le pays. C'est l'émergence, à la fin des années cinquantes, de l'islamisme chez les chiites, qui réhabilitera l'image des pionniers sunnites du mouvement réformiste en Irak.

Les cheikhs de confréries soufies ont été utilisés par les Britanniques pour établir leur domination sur l'Irak à travers des institutions étatiques qui institutionnalisèrent, dans un nouveau cadre, le pouvoir exclusif des élites sunnites. Leur influence déclina ensuite rapidement, au profit d'autres élites, notamment les grands chefs de tribus, dont la base sociale était incomparablement plus étendue. Identifiée à la monarchie, l'élite soufie a perdu ses prérogatives avec la révolution de 1958. Les *waqfs* rifā'is dépendent maintenant du ministère des Waqfs. Les al-Jilānī conservèrent leur fonction de *nāẓir* pour la Qādiriyya jusqu'en 1962, date à laquelle Qāsim transféra leurs *waqfs* au ministère.⁸¹ Aujourd'hui, il n'y a plus qu'un petit nombre de confréries encore actives en Irak arabe.⁸² Contrairement au pays kurde, où Naqshbandiyya et Qādiriyya ont de solides places fortes, la partie arabe de l'Irak a vu ses confréries perdre toute consistance.

Avec soixante-douze tekkés, répartis entre Sāmarrā', Baghdad, Tikrīt, Kirkuk, Salmān Pāk, Khālīṣ et Jalawlā', la Rifā'iyya était la

⁸⁰ Voir le "Congrès de Karbalā'", convoqué par les ulama chiites en avril 1922 en signe de protestation contre les raids des Ikhwān, au cours duquel les Ikhwān furent accusés d'être les agents des Anglais, in Pierre-Jean Luizard, *La formation de l'Irak* 440-8.

⁸¹ Les al-Jilānī, parmi lesquels était choisi le *naqīb al-ashrāf* de Baghdad depuis 1531, virent cette fonction supprimée par Qāsim en 1962, au même moment où le transfert de leurs *waqfs* au Ministère des Waqfs rendait leur fonction de *nāẓir* toute théorique. Voir Batatu, op. cit. 153.

⁸² Voir Fred De Jong, 'Les confréries mystiques musulmanes au Machreq arabe', in A. Popovic et G. Veinstein (eds.), *Les ordres mystiques dans l'islam* (Paris 1986) 225-30, et Pierre-Jean Luizard, 'Le Moyen-Orient arabe', in A. Popovic et G. Veinstein (eds.), *Les voies d'Allah* (Paris 1996) 342-371.

confrérie la plus importante en Irak arabe jusqu'au début du vingtième siècle.⁸³ Mais cette confrérie a connu une période de déclin qui l'a réduite aujourd'hui à l'état de confrérie fantôme. Privée de celui qui avait maintenu son influence, Ṭālib Pacha, elle ne retrouva ensuite aucun représentant doté d'un charisme similaire. Certains cheikhs rifā'īs tentèrent, à l'instar de cheikh Muhyī'l-Dīn Āl Qamr (mort en 1933),⁸⁴ d'enrayer ce déclin. Depuis son quartier de Maḥallat al-ʿizza, il développa la confrérie en direction des classes les plus défavorisées. Muṣṭafa Āl Qamr, le cheikh actuel d'un tekké rifā'ī à Maḥallat al-faḍl, un autre quartier de Bagdad, maintient aujourd'hui tant bien que mal une certaine tradition. Depuis une décennie, la confrérie tente timidement de renaître sous la direction de Khāshī al-Rāwī, un cheikh soufi de Bagdad.

Ce qui reste de l'influence de la Rifā'iyya est attesté par les fonctions occupées dans l'armée par nombre d'officiers issus de milieux rifā'īs. Ainsi, les al-Rāwī et les Tabaqshalī ont eu des responsabilités importantes dans l'armée irakienne, surtout après la révolution de 1958.⁸⁵ Les liens familiaux des dirigeants du second régime baassiste avec des sayyids rifā'īs ont été utilisés à un moment où le régime pensait que cette nouvelle légitimité islamique pourrait lui suffire dans un contexte d'affrontement avec le mouvement religieux chiite renaissant. Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, président de la république et chef des forces armées jusqu'en 1977, le père adoptif de Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, appartenait à une famille rifā'ie de Tikrīt. La tribu Al-bū Nāsir, dont étaient membres Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr et Khayrallāh Tulfāh, le beau-père de Ṣaddām, ainsi que les enfants de Ḥasan al-Majīd, le cousin de Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, se prêta à la tentative de revivification d'une légitimité qui semblait bien lointaine. Le mausolée d'Aḥmad al-Rifā'ī fut restauré en 1980 sur ordre de Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, avec la construction d'une route en asphalte entre ʿAmāra et le village de Rifā'ī.

La ville soufie par excellence demeure Sāmarrāʾ, qui est aussi la quatrième ville sainte chiite d'Irak. À côté du mausolée scintillant d'or des dixième et onzième Imams chiites, là où la tradition chiite situe l'Occultation du douzième Imam, on trouve une concentration importante de tekkés, la plupart à l'abandon, dont deux tekkés

⁸³ Voir al-Sāmarrāʾī, *al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifā'ī* 94-110, 113-7 et Batatu, op. cit. 39.

⁸⁴ al-Suhrawardī, *Lubb al-albāb* ii, 447-8; et al-Sāmarrāʾī, *al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifā'ī* 99-100.

⁸⁵ Voir Batatu, op. cit., livre iii, *The Communists, the Ba'athists and the Free Officers*, 772, 785, 810-1, 872-3, 881-2, 913, 931, 971, 1003, 1006-7, 1011, 1065.

rifāʿīs. A Bagdad, la tradition qādirie se perpétue à travers les séances hebdomadaire de *dhikr*, dans la mosquée jouxtant le mausolée de ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī, ainsi que dans un nombre réduit de tekkés.

Instrument privilégié de gouvernement sunnite, dans un pays marqué par des siècles de domination confessionnelle des sunnites sur la majorité chiite, les confréries ont aujourd’hui perdu cette fonction qui était la leur. Elles doivent en conséquence affronter une réalité qui leur est défavorable: un chiisme majoritaire qui les assimile au pouvoir et les traite comme tel, à un moment où la *marjaʿiyya* chiite, encore renforcée par la révolution islamique en Iran, se pose comme pouvoir religieux et temporel indépendant des Etats, et des pouvoirs sunnites qui se passent désormais d’elles. Au cours du siècle passé, les confréries soufies et la *marjaʿiyya* ont fonctionné comme les directions religieuses de deux communautés aux histoires non pas séparées, mais distinctes et toujours conflictuelles. A chacun des grands événements qu’a connu le pays, elles se sont retrouvé dans des camps opposés.

OPPOSITION TO SUFISM IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY EGYPT
(1900-1970)
A PRELIMINARY SURVEY

FREDERICK DE JONG

Polemics and clashes between adherents of mystical and non- or anti-mystical conceptions of Islam are relatively rare in nineteenth-century Egypt. Their frequency and intensity are only faint reflections of what is reported from earlier periods.¹ In as much as opposition was expressed in writing, it consisted of criticism of practice and not of dogma. Examples are Wafā Muḥammad al-Qūnī al-Miṣrī in his *al-Radd al-mubīn ‘alā al-jahalat al-mutaṣawwifīn*² and Ḥusayn al-Marṣafī in his *al-Kalīm al-thamānī*.³ In addition, one might mention ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Jāwīsh, one of the nationalist leaders in the early decades of the twentieth century. Jāwīsh⁴ was a disciple of Muḥammad ‘Abduh’s at the end of the nineteenth century. He attacked the Sufi orders in Egypt in the person of Muḥammad Tawfiq al-Bakrī, the supreme head of the Sufi orders in Egypt in 1892.⁵ Other reformist thinkers who addressed themselves to al-Bakrī with the aim of convincing him of the need to reform the Sufi orders under his jurisdiction and to forbid practices considered to be unlawful are ‘Abd Allāh al-Nadīm⁶ and Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā.⁷

Al-Bakrī himself recognised the need for the elimination of certain elements of ritual, such as the use of musical instruments and the *dabbūs* in the *ḥaḍra* and the eating of glass and fire.⁸ During his tenure of office, the first regulations for the Sufi orders in Egypt

1 See e.g. Tawfiq al-Ṭawīl, *al-Ṭasawwuf fī Miṣr ibbāna al-‘aṣr al-‘uthmānī* (Cairo 1946) 163ff.

2 Cairo 1876.

3 Cairo 1881, 17f.

4 For a biography, see Ḥasan al-Shaykh, *‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Jāwīsh* (Cairo 1961).

5 Māhir Hasan Fahmī, *Muḥammad Tawfiq al-Bakrī* (Cairo 1967) 47f.

6 ‘Abd Allāh al-Nadīm, ‘Al-ṭuruq wa-mā fihā min al-bida‘’, *al-Ustādh* xxxiv (1893) 786ff.

7 Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, *Ta’rīkh al-ustādh al-imām al-shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abduh* (Cairo 1324) i, 129.

8 Muḥammad Tawfiq al-Bakrī, *al-Mustaqbal li’l-islām* (Cairo 1893) 20.

were promulgated by khedivial decree in 1895.⁹ These were changed and amended in 1903 and 1910 and supplemented by a set of regulations known as *al-lā'iha al-dākhiliyya li'l-ṭuruq al-ṣūfiyya* in 1905.¹⁰ They contained a number of paragraphs prohibiting those ritual practices on which reformist criticism was centred and they were presented as the long desired measures providing for a reform of the Sufi orders.¹¹

The goals of Muḥammad Tawfiq al-Bakrī, who is known to have drafted the regulations himself, must have been twofold. With the paragraphs prohibiting and regulating certain aspects of ritual and belief, he responded to the principal challenge Sufism was facing at the time: the increasing calls for *islāh* of the reformists and rumours casting doubt on the correctness of belief of some heads of the Sufi orders under his jurisdiction.¹² These paragraphs were few, and since they were not enforced thereafter¹³ it seems likely that they were included for opportunist reasons only. This seems even more probable in view of the fact that a prohibition of ritual aspects of the Sufi orders under attack could have been obtained through separate khedivial decrees issued to this effect, the way the well-known *dawsa* of the Sa'adiyya was suppressed in 1881.¹⁴ The regulations, however, mostly dealt with administrative and organisational aspects of the Sufi orders. They were instrumental in consolidating the power-position of Muḥammad Tawfiq al-Bakrī by reaffirming his authority over the Sufi orders. He was in need of such a reaffirmation because upon his appointment a number of schismatic orders had arisen.¹⁵ Also new Sufi orders, which refused to recognise al-Bakrī as *shaykh mashāyikh al-ṭuruq al-ṣūfiyya*, had been introduced into Egypt.¹⁶ Moreover, immediately after his appointment, the *shaykh* of the Marāziqiyya Aḥmadiyya had disputed al-Bakrī's authority. The *shaykh* of this order claimed that all the Aḥmadiyya orders came under his jurisdiction and not under al-Bakrī's. His claims were based

⁹ See *al-Waqā'i' al-miṣriyya* lxvii (17 June 1895) 1426.

¹⁰ For a discussion of the contents of the Regulations, see F. De Jong, *Ṭuruq and Ṭuruq-linked Institutions in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (Leiden 1978) passim.

¹¹ See *al-Mu'ayyad*, 3 June 1905.

¹² *al-Ustādh*, xxxv (1893) 828ff.

¹³ See *al-Mu'ayyad* of 22 and 28 July 1915 as well as 5 and 6 August of the same year.

¹⁴ This was done by the khedive Muḥammad Tawfiq, who based himself on a fatwa of the *qāḍī al-quḍāt* in Egypt.

¹⁵ Cf. De Jong, *Ṭuruq*, Chapter 4, passim.

¹⁶ Op. cit.

on old firmans¹⁷ and led to a conflict in which Nūbār Bāshā was obliged to intervene.¹⁸

The promulgation of the various regulations reaffirmed and strengthened the position of al-Bakrī. They made the office of *shaykh mashāyikh al-ṭuruq al-ṣūfiyya* (the *mashyakha*), and the Sufi orders recognised by it, into an independent institution. They emphasised the identity of these orders under the *mashyakha* and thus provided a guarantee against incorporation into and supervision of lower offices by higher ones. They also transformed the Sufi orders into a fully fledged bureaucratic system which had khedivial approval, protection and support.

The protection of interests which the regulations offered the heads of the Sufi orders limited the need for a defensive response against those challenging Sufism. This would seem to be a factor explaining the absence of writings in defence of Sufism by these shaykhs, whereas shaykhs who did produce such writings did not share in the protection of the regulations. At the same time, however, the almost complete absence of reactions to reformist criticism of Sufism and the Sufi orders is characteristic of the period of decline of the Sufi orders which started after World War I, partly in consequence of the emergence of secularising trends and the loss of members to a variety of Islamic voluntary organisations, and especially to *al-Jamʿiyya al-sharʿiyya* (see below) and the Society of the Muslim Brothers, and which was to last till the early years of the Nāṣir era.¹⁹

In the early years of the twentieth century, reformist criticism of Sufism became more intense and frequent. One of Sufism's critics was Muḥammad ʿUmar, who was the Keeper of the khedivial library and was involved with the nationalist circles around Saʿd Zaghlūl.²⁰ The views which Muḥammad ʿUmar expresses in his *Ḥādīr al-*

¹⁷ Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Shams al-Dīn, *al-Mawāʿiẓ al-ṣūfiyya fī al-ṭarīqa al-aḥmadiyya* (Cairo 1332) 24ff.

¹⁸ *al-Ahrām*, 20 September 1892, 3.

¹⁹ This means that I am now in agreement with H.A.R. Gibb (*Modern Trends in Islam*, 37ff.) and M.D. Gilseman ['Some factors in the decline of the Sufi orders in modern Egypt', *Muslim World* lvii/1 (1970), 11] that the Sufi orders did become peripheral institutions and lose their hold on the population, in as much as these two scholars' observations refer to the first half of the twentieth century. Here, I wish to revise my earlier view that the Sufi orders in Egypt continued to flourish up through the twentieth century [cf. my 'Ṭuruq and ṭuruq-opposition in 20th-century Egypt', in F. Rundgren (ed.), *Proceedings of the VIth Congress of Arabic and Islamic Studies* (Stockholm 1975) 92].

²⁰ Cf. the preface to the tract mentioned in note 21.

*miṣriyyīn aw sirr ta'akhhurihim*²¹ would seem to be representative for the "Europeanizers" (*al-mutafranjiyyūn*), who constituted one pole of the continuum between modernism and conservatism in Egypt at the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century.²² The members of the Sufi orders are qualified by ʿUmar as a repulsive lot (*qawm khubathāʾ*) who recite the *tahlīl* for worldly aims, thus combining lies (*kidhb*) with trade (*kasb*). They are turning *dhikr* into scandalous occasions performed in the presence of foreigners to whom they present this as the basis of Islam. They turn mosques into taverns and night-clubs, whereas the *bidaʿ* have entered into their ʿaqāʾid. ʿUmar condemned *mawlid*s and qualified *karāmāt* as self-deception and superstition.²³

*Mawlid*s were also condemned by Muḥammad ʿAbduh, e.g. in his influential *Tafsīr al-manār*.²⁴ Concerning *karāmāt* he stated in his *Risālat al-tawḥīd* that any Muslim can deny the occurrence of any *karāma* without violating a fundamental doctrine of Islam.²⁵ In the same treatise ʿAbduh states that it is impossible to know God²⁶ and that trying to penetrate the reality of God is futile and harmful.²⁷ In conjunction with this position, ʿAbduh's conception of Islam does not recognise *ilhām* as a possible source of knowledge, or the idea that *al-nūr al-muḥammadī* is the substance of substances that preceded everything in the creation.²⁸

ʿAbduh's views went virtually unchallenged by adherents of a mystical conception of Islam. One of those who did criticise and condemn his ideas, in sermons and in publications, was a shaykh of a Shādhiliyya branch, Muḥammad al-Jinbayhī.²⁹ In several of his

21 Cairo 1902, 249ff.

22 Cf. P.J. Vatikiotis, *The Modern History of Egypt* (London 1969) 211.

23 *Ḥāḍir al-miṣriyyīn* 253.

24 Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *Tafsīr al-qurʾān al-ḥakīm al-shahīr bi-Tafsīr al-manār* (Cairo n.d.) ii, 75.

25 Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *Risālat al-tawḥīd* (Būlāq 1315) 131f.

26 Op. cit. 30.

27 Op. cit. 30.

28 Therefore, C.C. Adams' [*Islam and Modernism in Egypt. A study of the modern reform movement inaugurated by Muḥammad ʿAbduh* (London 1933) 32] observation that ʿAbduh was sympathetic towards Sufism throughout his life is not reflected in ʿAbduh's writings. A similar opinion expressed by ʿUthmān Amīn, *Rāʾid al-fikr al-miṣrī al-imām Muḥammad ʿAbduh* (Cairo 1965) 208, finds no support in the sources.

29 On al-Jinbayhī and his writings, see F. De Jong, al-Djanbiḥī, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Nabī, in *Supplement to the E.I.*, 244. Alternative vocalizations encountered are al-Junbiḥī and al-Junbayhī. However, his *nisba* refers to the village of al-Jinbāwī (*markaz* Ityāy al-Barūd, province al-Buḥayra), and thus should be vocalized al-Jinbayhī.

writings he stated that those calling for *islāh* were not different from the Wahnabiyya.³⁰ He attacked and denounced the inspirers of the *islāh* movement, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Muḥammad ʿAbduh, in a number of tracts,³¹ as well as its representatives such as Qāsim Amīn and Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī.³² According to al-Jinbayhī the call for *islāh*, including the idea of *islāh* of Sufism, is without doubt the most ugly of all *bidʿa*.³³ “The incompetent ones” (*al-sufahāʾ*) who call for it delude the common people.³⁴ In numerous passages in his writings al-Jinbayhī qualifies ʿAbduh and al-Afghānī as Wahnābis, in conjunction with discussions bemoaning the discord and evil which Wahnābism³⁵ has brought to the world of Islam.³⁶

The influence of Wahnābī Islam on the thought of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā and on those who belonged to what became known as the Salafiyya movement is well documented. The major vehicle for the dissemination of their ideas was the periodical *al-Manār*. According to H.A.R. Gibb, this periodical circulated especially among the trading and artisan classes in which Sufism had its deepest roots, and it reopened the old conflict between transcendental unitarianism and Sufism.³⁷ It seems unlikely, however, that *al-Manār* actually prompted a decline in the membership of the Sufi orders, as suggested by Gibb:³⁸ *Al-Manār* did not offer an organisation with which they could identify. The *mashykhāt al-ṭuruq al-sūfiyya* and the orders under its jurisdiction did not perceive the Salafiyya movement as a threat, as would seem, because the latter lacked formal organi-

³⁰ See e.g. his *Al-razāyā al-ʿaṣriyya li-shubbān al-unma al-miṣriyya* [n.p., n.d. (circa 1923)] 60, 149f.

³¹ E.g. *Zahẓahāt al-zāʾighīn ʿan munāwashāt al-mutawassilīn* (Cairo 1336/1917-1918) 18, 63; *al-Razāyā al-ʿaṣriyya* 46ff.; *al-ʿAmal al-mabrūr fī radʿ ahl al-ghurūr* (Cairo n.d.) 136, 184.

³² See *Irshād al-umam ilā yānbūʿ al-ḥikam* (Cairo 1338/1919-1920), 90; *Al-ʿamal al-mabrūr* 49ff.; *Aṣḍāq al-naṣāʾiḥ: al-Nahy ʿan al-mūbiqāt waʾl-qabāʾiḥ* (Cairo n.d.) 110f.

³³ Cf. *Karam al-rubūbiyya*, 14.

³⁴ *Muthabbīt al-ʿaql waʾl-dīn fī radd ʿalā sufahāʾ al-mubashshirīn* (Cairo n.d.) 23.

³⁵ Another source of evil, perhaps more destructive than Wahnābism, is naturalist philosophy. Although his attacks mainly concern European naturalist philosophy, he also attacks naturalism in the Islamic tradition and notably Ibn Sīnā; cf. e.g. his *Risālat al-ḥabīb wa-dalālat al-ṭabīb* (Cairo n.d.), 88. His most focused and comprehensive rejection of Naturalism is *al-ʿAmal al-mabrūr* (Cairo n.d.).

³⁶ See e.g. *al-Razāyā al-ʿaṣriyya*, 149f.; cf. 47 where naturalist philosophy is mentioned alongside Wahnābism as bringing evil and discord. Al-Janbiḥī's most comprehensive rejection of Naturalism is his *al-ʿAmal al-mabrūr* (see above, note 32).

³⁷ H.A.R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam* (Chicago 1945) 35.

³⁸ Op. cit.

sation and structure and was not competing with the Sufi orders for assets.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Wahnābī activity was incidental, unorganised and did not present a serious challenge to Sufism. Information concerning Wahnābī activists in Egypt at the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century is recorded by Ibrāhīm al-Samannūdī.³⁹ He tells us about the removal of the *muftī* of al-Daqahliyya by khedivial decree in 1894 because of his Wahnābī sympathies.⁴⁰ He also gives an account of the activities of Wahnābī missionaries in al-Manṣūra and al-Dimyāt.⁴¹

Wahnābism became the most important challenge facing Sufism with the foundation of *al-Jamʿiyya al-sharʿiyya li-taʿāwun al-ʿāmilīn bi'l-kitāb wa'l-sunna al-muḥammadiyya* by Maḥmūd Khaṭṭāb al-Subkī in 1913.⁴² Al-Subkī was an Azhar-educated shaykh who had been an active adherent of the Ṣāwiyya Khalwatiyya order before he became the most eminent exponent of Wahnābism in Egypt of his generation.⁴³ He was a prolific author, and in many of his writings he violently attacked Sufism in its practical as well as theoretical aspects, using the arguments of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya and taking their side in matters of *tawḥīd*.⁴⁴ Opposition to al-Subkī's conception of Islam was widespread. Among those who wrote against him were well-known and respected scholars such as Muḥammad Bakhīt al-Muṭīʿī, the *muftī* of Egypt;⁴⁵ Yūsuf al-Dijwī, the famous teacher of Mālikī *fiqh* at al-Azhar;⁴⁶ Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Biblāwī, the *khaṭīb* of the mosque of al-

³⁹ Ibrāhīm al-Samannūdī, *Saʿādat al-dārayn fi'l-radd ʿalā al-firqatayn al-wahnābiyya wa-muqallidat al-zāhiriyya*, ii vols. (Cairo 1319-20).

⁴⁰ Op. cit. 127.

⁴¹ Op. cit. 149.

⁴² On al-Subkī, see ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm Ḥāmid Khaṭṭāb, *Lamaḥāt min taʾrīkh al-inām al-shaykh Maḥmūd Muḥammad Khaṭṭāb al-Subkī* (Cairo 1985).

⁴³ On his early *ṭarīqa* affiliation, see his *al-ʿAhd al-wathīq li-man arāda sulūk aḥsan ṭarīq* (Cairo n.d.; circa 1900). The biography which precedes the first volume of his *al-Dīn al-khālīṣ aw irshād al-khalq ilā dīn al-ḥaqq*, vi vols. (Cairo 1964), written by Abū'l-Qāsim Ibrāhīm and sanctioned by Maḥmūd's son Amin, is silent about his early involvement with the Ṣāwiyya.

⁴⁴ See e.g. his *Iṣṣābat al-sihām* (Cairo 1320), and *Taʿjīl al-qadāʾ al-mubram ʿalā man saʿā dīdd sunnat al-rasūl al-aʿẓam* (Cairo 1330).

⁴⁵ See F. De Jong, 'Bakhīt al-Muṭīʿī al-Ḥanafī, Muḥammad', in *Supplement to the E.I.*, 121.

⁴⁶ For bio-and bibliographical data, see Zakī Muḥammad Mujāhid, *al-Aʿlām al-sharqiyya fi'l-miʿa ʿashra al-hijriyya*, ii (Cairo 1950) 192.

Husayn,⁴⁷ and Salāma al-^cAzāmī, who was teaching *ḥadīth* at al-Azhar and was also shaykh of a Naqshbandī order.⁴⁸ Salāma al-^cAzāmī prefaced a book by al-Subkī's most vehement critic, Muṣṭafā Abū al-Sayf al-Ḥammāmī.⁴⁹ This shaykh, who was a Khalwatī, produced several other texts against al-Subkī.⁵⁰ Al-Ḥammāmī's disdain for al-Subkī was shared by Muḥammad al-Jinbayhī who published an extensive rejection of al-Subkī's anti-Sufi opinions.⁵¹

From the nineteen-twenties the *Jam^ciyya al-shar^ciyya* engaged in active campaigning in the countryside and tried to obtain control over mosques and *awqāf*. These activities endangered vested interests of Sufi orders, and implied competition for assets between these orders and the *Jam^ciyya al-shar^ciyya*. On numerous occasions clashes between adherents of Sufi orders and adherents of the *Jam^ciyya* took place, sometimes escalating to fierce battles with wounded and dead.⁵²

Al-Bakrī and the shaykhs of the Sufi orders who recognised his authority did not respond to al-Subkī's attacks on Sufism and its institutions. Their apparent indifference to attacks on Sufism changed when they were confronting a direct challenge of their authority during the periods that Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī held the office of *shaykh al-Azhar*, in 1928-1929 and from 1935 till 1945.⁵³ Al-Marāghī was working for a reform of the teaching at al-Azhar in conjunction with administrative reforms. However, his final goal was the total reorganisation of the different bodies of Islamic bureaucracy and the Islamic voluntary associations into one single structure supervised by al-Azhar.⁵⁴ In 1935, in a speech on the occasion of his reappointment, al-Marāghī stated his intention to eliminate the divisions between the *madhhabs*, while hinting at his intention to take

47 Cf. Muṣṭafā Abū Sayf al-Ḥammāmī, *Raf^c al-ḥijāb ^can balāyā Ibn Khaṭṭāb* (Cairo 1337) 34-36.

48 Ibid. 61-64.

49 See note 47.

50 The most substantial of these is *Istikshāf al-sirr al-maqṣūd min kutub al-shaykh al-Subkī Maḥmūd* (Cairo 1336).

51 *Irshād al-shaykh Maḥmūd Khaṭṭāb ilā tariq al-ināba wa'l-matāb* (Cairo 1336).

52 For accounts and additional information concerning these conflicts, e.g. in Alexandria, Ṭūkh, and Baḥtīm, see Ibrāhīm Ḥilmī al-Qādirī, *Jalāl al-ḥaqq fī kashf aḥwāl shirār al-khalq* (Alexandria 1936) *passim*.

53 For biographical data, see Abū'l-Wafā al-Marāghī, *al-Shaykh al-Marāghī bi-aqlām al-kuttāb* (Cairo 1957).

54 See Ibrāhīm ^cAlī Abū'l-Khashshāb, *Awliyā' allāh al-ṣāliḥūn* (Cairo 1955) 45ff.

action against other groupings as well.⁵⁵ Shortly afterwards, in the course of informal discussions, it became clear that he had meant the Sufi orders. His proposal was to abolish the *mashyakha* of the orders, i.e. the office held by al-Bakrī entailing supreme supervision over the orders, and to grant supervision to the *Hayʾat kibār al-ʿulamāʾ* instead. Moreover, the heads of the orders who were not formally qualified as *ʿālim* were to be removed from their offices and replaced by shaykhs who did have this qualification.⁵⁶ These proposed reforms aroused opposition from various sides. In order to avoid jeopardising vested interests of the Sufi orders which might endanger his position, al-Marāghī found himself obliged to make concessions. Structural and administrative changes in the formally recognised Sufi orders were never officially announced as objectives of his reform policy.⁵⁷ Changing his strategy, al-Marāghī abandoned the idea of direct control of the Sufi orders by al-Azhar and aimed at indirect control. This was to be obtained by means of a council with the explicit task of combating *bidaʿ*. This council was to consist of representatives from al-Azhar, *Dār al-iftāʾ*, the Ministry of Awqāf and the Azhar department of *al-Waʿz waʾl-irshād*. In this way intervention in the affairs of the Sufi orders was made possible through a council formally detached from al-Azhar, yet dominated by it. The Council was inaugurated in January 1936⁵⁸ and immediately met with strong opposition from the Sufi orders and ʿAbd al-Ḥamid al-Bakrī, the then *shaykh mashāyikh al-ṭuruq al-ṣūfiyya*, who issued a statement of disapproval.⁵⁹ For a variety of reasons, mainly relating to competition between the members of the Council at a personal level and to competition between the agencies they represented, the Council never became truly operational. When al-Marāghī died in office in 1945, the Council had not yet initiated a reform of the Sufi orders as had been his objective.

In 1947, king Fārūq deposed the then *shaykh mashāyikh al-ṭuruq al-ṣūfiyya*, Aḥmad Murād al-Bakrī, allegedly for his activities in support of the separatist movement in the Sudan when on a visit there.⁶⁰ His successor was Aḥmad al-Ṣawī, an Azharī scholar with-

⁵⁵ Abūʾl-Wafā al-Marāghī, op. cit. 21ff.

⁵⁶ *al-Ahrām*, 17 September 1935, 11.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 29 September 1935, 9.

⁵⁸ *al-Balāgh*, 16 January 1936, 6.

⁵⁹ *al-Jihād*, 25 January 1936. See also al-Ṭawīl, op. cit. 185.

⁶⁰ F. De Jong, 'Aspects of the Political Involvement of Sufi Orders in Twentieth-Century Egypt (1907-1970)', in G.R. Warburg & U.M. Kupferschmidt (eds.), *Islam, Nationalism and*

out a Sufi background who had been a student of Muḥammad ʿAbduh's.⁶¹ His candidature had been put forward by the *shaykh al-Azhar*, Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Rāziq, who was backed by the *mufti* of Egypt, ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm, and the Prime Minister, Maḥmūd Fahmī al-Nuqrāshī.⁶² The circumstances which led to Aḥmad al-Ṣāwī's appointment,⁶³ and his friendly relations with both the *shaykh al-Azhar* and the *mufti*, caused suspicion amongst the heads of the Sufi orders. They considered al-Ṣāwī to be a tool of the anti-Sufi and Wahhābī-oriented Azhar reformists who aimed at translating their criticism of the Sufi orders into concrete measures.⁶⁴

Al-Ṣāwī's opinions concerning the Sufi orders were reflected in his efforts to initiate reforms. These aimed at the formal abolition of the established practice of hereditary succession to the office of head of a Sufi order, while restricting appointment to persons with an Azhar-training. In this manner, the change of leadership envisaged by al-Marāghī would be accomplished. In addition, he considered measures impeding the trade in *ijāzas*. Since this was an important source of income for the *shaykhs* of the orders recognised by the *mashyakha*, it is not surprising that al-Ṣāwī was opposed and frustrated in his plans to implement the changes deemed necessary in reformist circles. Numerous committees for the study and discussion of appropriate regulations were formed and subsequently dissolved.⁶⁵ When al-Ṣāwī realised that he could not achieve an implementation of reform and *iṣlāḥ* of the Sufi orders by means of negotiations with the heads of the orders under the authority of the *mashyakha*, he changed his strategy. As al-Marāghī had done before him, he developed plans for *iṣlāḥ* of Sufism by means of a council in which a number of Islamic institutions were to be represented.⁶⁶ The formation of such a council was delayed by the revolution of 1952, but in 1953 a council for *iṣlāḥ* of the Sufi orders was inaugurated within the framework of the Ministry of the Interior.⁶⁷

Radicalism in Egypt and the Sudan (New York 1993) 189.

⁶¹ For a biography, see Faṭḥī Maḥmūd Shuhdī, *al-ʿĀrif bi'llāh rajul al-ṣalāḥ wa'l-iṣlāḥ al-shaykh Aḥmad al-Ṣāwī shaykh mashāyikh al-ṭuruq al-sūfiyya* (Shabīn al-Kūm 1948).

⁶² Cf. De Jong, 'Political Involvement' 190.

⁶³ Op. cit. 189f.

⁶⁴ Oral communication to the author by Aḥmad al-Ṣāwī's son ʿIṣām.

⁶⁵ Muḥammad Ḥasan Shams al-Dīn, *al-Risāla al-aḥmadiyya al-thāniya* (Cairo 1376) 55.

⁶⁶ On the opposition towards al-Ṣāwī's reform plans, see *Majallat al-tahrīr*, 5 November 1957, 28–29; 12 November 1957, 26–27; 19 November 1957, 26–27; 26 November 1957, 26–27; 3 December 1957, 26–27; 10 December 1957, 26–27.

⁶⁷ *al-Muslim*, 1955, xx, 3.

With the inauguration of the Council, the discussions concerning teaching and practice of the Sufi orders took on a new dimension. The members of the Council consisted of representatives from al-Azhar, *Dār al-iftāʾ*, the Ministry of Awqāf, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of National Guidance. Moreover, no requirements were imposed regarding affiliations or sympathies with the Sufi orders on the part of those representing the participating institutions. Subsequently, members of the *Society of the Muslim Brothers* came to dominate the Council at a time when contempt for and aversion towards Sufism had become a major feature of the *Brothers'* orientation.⁶⁸

In May 1953, the leader of the *Muslim Brothers*, Ḥasan Ismāʿīl al-Huḍaybī, declared that the Council had presented proposals to the Ministry of the Interior concerning a general prohibition of the Sufi orders in Egypt.⁶⁹ This initiative brought about the most acute confrontation between the Sufi orders and the *Brothers* in the aforementioned Council in the Ministry of the Interior. When the resulting commotion threatened to assume nation-wide dimensions, the *mufti* of Egypt, Ḥasanayn Muḥammad Makhlūf, issued a fatwa in favour of the Sufi orders, and the Minister of Awqāf, Ḥasan al-Bāqūrī, declared himself against the proposed prohibition. Subsequently, the Revolutionary Command Council issued a decree providing for the dissolution of the Council in the Ministry of the Interior and the creation of a new one in the Ministry of Awqāf. This new council, however, turned out to be under the complete control of the *Society of the Muslim Brothers*. Its members in the Council started to attack Sufism in radio broadcasts and in pamphlets. Shortly before the final prohibition of the *Muslim Brothers* in 1954, Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir intervened and dissolved the Council in May of the same year.⁷⁰

From early 1955 the military government started to take an active interest in the Sufi orders. ʿAbd al-Ḥakīm ʿĀmir, then a member of the Revolutionary Command Council, was charged with supervision over reform efforts.⁷¹ This manifestation of a sudden interest in the Sufi orders would seem to be linked with the final prohibition of the *Society of the Muslim Brothers*: the members of the Command Council must have become aware of the use that could be made of

⁶⁸ On the attitudes of the Brothers towards Sufism, see R.P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (London 1969) 214ff.

⁶⁹ *al-Jumhūr al-miṣrī*, 11 May 1953 (no. 123), 6.

⁷⁰ Shams al-Dīn, *al-Risāla al-aḥmadiyya*, 56.

⁷¹ *al-Ahrām*, 18 March 1955, 4.

mystical Islam and of the administrative organisation of the Sufi orders to combat the opposition inspired by the *Brothers* as well as to strengthen and widen its own base of support by stimulating and favouring the adherents of conceptions of Islam that were rooted in and partly identical with some of the central conceptions in popular Islam.⁷² The optimal exploitation of the potential usefulness of mystical Islam for the regime required the neutralisation of the reform-minded faction and its principal exponent, Aḥmad al-Šāwī. Thus, ʿĀmir arranged for the latter's dismissal⁷³ and for the appointment of Muḥammad Maḥmūd ʿIlwān as his successor.⁷⁴ Under ʿIlwān's supervision an era of revival of organised Islamic mysticism began in Egypt. Colloquies on Sufism were organised under the auspices of the Supreme Sufi Council,⁷⁵ a periodical (*al-Islām wa'l-taṣawwuf*) was founded, which was to be the official mouthpiece of organised Islamic mysticism; several Sufi orders obtained official recognition, while membership of the orders steadily increased. In addition, organised mysticism was given a more prominent role at official religious celebrations, while more *mawlid*s⁷⁶ were celebrated and on a larger scale than had been the case in the decade before the revolution.

As a rule, since its creation in 1961, the *Arab Socialist Union* (ASU) was involved in the organisation of these celebrations which were used for making propaganda for the regime by means of pamphlets, banners and public speeches. In addition, the Sufi orders themselves, under the supervision of the Sufi Council headed by ʿIlwān, were increasingly used for the distribution of political and ideological propaganda, whereas the *Arab Socialist Union* became directly involved with the administration of the orders when a certificate of good character signed by a member of the local Union committee, among other signatories, became a prerequisite for ap-

⁷² For a discussion of the nature of this partial identity, see F. De Jong, 'Der Volksislam und die mystischen Bruderschaften', in W. Ende & U. Steinbach (eds.), *Der Islam in der Gegenwart* (Munich 1991) 487-504.

⁷³ On the events during al-Šāwī's last years in office, see the references in note 64.

⁷⁴ On the factors determining the choice of ʿIlwān for the office of *shaykh mashāyikh al-ṭuruq al-šūfiyya*, see De Jong, 'Ṭuruq and ṭuruq-opposition' 91; and 'Political Involvement' 197.

⁷⁵ The Supreme Sufi Council (*al-Majlis al-šūfi al-aʿlā*) consisted of four members selected by the *shaykh mashāyikh al-ṭuruq al-šūfiyya* from among eight shaykhs nominated every three years by the General Assembly of the heads of all the officially recognised orders.

⁷⁶ For an anthropological study, see Fārūq Aḥmad Muṣṭafā, *al-Mawālid. Dirāsa li'l-ʿādāt wa'l-taqālid al-shaʿbiyya fi Miṣr* (Alexandria 1981).

pointment to the various offices in the hierarchy of the officially recognised Sufi orders. Moreover, the staging of *ḥaḍras* in mosques was made subject to permission from the Ministry of Awqāf.

Muḥammad Maḥmūd ʿIlwān's administration of the Sufi orders served the aims of the regime: to prevent or minimise any conflict between the Sufi orders among themselves and between Sufis and their opponents. The use of censorship to implement this policy seems to have been limited and polemics were allowed. Notable are the polemics between the monthlies *al-Muslim*,⁷⁷ defending the mystical point of view, and *al-Iʿtiṣām*, the monthly of *al-Jamʿiyya al-sharʿiyya*. This organisation continued to agitate against the Sufi orders and occasionally resorted to force.⁷⁸ Also the polemics between *al-Muslim* and *al-Hady al-nabawī* should be mentioned. The latter periodical was the monthly of *Anṣār al-sunna al-muḥammadiyya*, an organisation of Wahhābī orientation, founded by Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiḳī (d. 1959).⁷⁹ After his death, the leadership of the *Anṣār* went to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Wakīl who had authored a number of pamphlets against Sufism.⁸⁰ His most substantial tract rejecting Sufism, *Hādhihī hiya al-ṣūfiyya*,⁸¹ occasionally refers to aspects of Sufism in Egypt in the past, i.e. in the nineteenth century or earlier. Its criticism of Sufism in Egypt in the nineteen-fifties is only implicit, and it never criticises individual *shaykhs* of Sufi orders or the *mashyakha*. The tract would seem to be representative of the sort of criticism of Sufism which was acceptable under the new regime. Both organisations, *al-Jamʿiyya al-sharʿiyya* and *Anṣār al-sunna al-muḥammadiyya*, were allowed to continue their propaganda against Sufism throughout the Nāṣir era when their opposition was tolerated apparently because of its moderation, its confinement to periodicals with a limited circulation, and the numerical insignificance of their membership.⁸²

⁷⁷ The monthly was published by *al-ʿAshīra al-muḥammadiyya*, an organisation affiliated with a Sufi order, the Muḥammadiyya Shādhiliyya. On *ʿAshīra* and the latter *ṭarīqa*, see Julian Johansen, *Sufism and Islamic Reform in Egypt. The Battle for Islamic Tradition* (Oxford 1996).

⁷⁸ See ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ʿAllām, *al-Sirr al-mulham wa'l-kanz al-aʿzam* (Cairo 1962) 52.

⁷⁹ For his biography, see his *Nūr min al-qurʾān* (Cairo 1384) 4 ff.

⁸⁰ E.g. *Zandaqat al-Jilī* (Cairo n.d.); and *Ṣūfiyyāt* (Cairo 1949).

⁸¹ Cairo 1955.

⁸² Cf. Isis Istefan, *Directory of Social Agencies* (Cairo 1956) 48, 149.

The major manifestations of opposition to Sufism in twentieth-century Egypt and the responses to the challenges posed by its critics were largely conditioned by structural features of the socio-political context. Thus, the proclamation of the regulations for the Sufi orders in the first decade of the century provided an institutional safeguard for the officially recognised Sufi orders and mitigated the need to respond to external criticism. Only those not belonging to the Sufi establishment, i.e. to one of the Sufi orders officially recognised by the state-sponsored *mashykhāt al-turuq al-ṣūfiyya*, wrote in defence of Sufism and against reformist and Wāḥḥābī-inspired criticism. When one of the Wāḥḥābī-oriented organisations turned radical, the members of the established Sufi orders were occasionally drawn into physical confrontations. Reform in al-Azhar entailed efforts to reform the Sufi orders and to place them under the supervision of this institution. These efforts implied opposition to Sufism in its traditional organisational and administrative context. This was perceived as a major threat which was met with political manoeuvres aimed at eliminating this threat to established interests. The success of the *Society of the Muslim Brothers* in obtaining key administrative positions enabled this organisation to conduct a campaign for the abolition of the Sufi orders. These opponents of Sufism were eliminated by the revolutionary regime in 1954. Thereafter, the opponents of Sufism to be taken seriously were reduced to two organisations of Wāḥḥābī orientation. Since the regime had started to cultivate the Sufi orders with its own political objectives in mind, opposition and criticism from Wāḥḥābī circles could be safely ignored. To the extent that this resulted in polemics, these were conducted in relatively insignificant periodicals with no national impact.

In Egypt, the marginal existence of the Sufi orders came to an end after the revolution of 1952 when political considerations seem to have induced the regime to stimulate a revival of organised Islamic mysticism. After the death in December 1969 of the key person behind the revival, Muḥammad ʿIlwān, the *shaykh mashayikh al-turuq al-ṣūfiyya*, this policy was maintained by his successor Muḥammad al-Suṭūhī. After the death of President Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir in 1970 the revival continued and broadened out under Anwar al-Sādāt whose regime seemed to arm itself against the anti-mystical religiously inspired opposition by cultivating mystical Islam. In so doing, the regime at the same time provided its critics with further arguments to justify their opposition and their refusal to accept the

legitimacy it claimed. This situation contributed to the growing cleavage between mystical and anti-mystical Islam in Egypt from the late nineteen-seventies onwards. The development in question may be traced in a variety of publications and documented events from that time to the present.⁸³

⁸³ A major source for tracing this development is *Majallat al-taṣawwuf al-islāmī*, which has been published as a monthly by the Higher Sufi Council in Cairo since 1979.

III

AFRICA

LA POLÉMIQUE CONTRE LE SOUFISME ET LES ORDRES SOUFIS EN AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST POST-COLONIALE

OUSMANE KANE

Présent depuis le onzième siècle en Afrique de l'Ouest, l'islam était pratiqué principalement par certains souverains, leurs cours, des lettrés et des commerçants impliqués dans le commerce trans-saharien. Il faudra attendre les grands mouvements de réforme qui se sont produits au cours des dix-huitième et dix-neuvième siècle pour y assister à des conversions massives à la religion musulmane.¹ Menés par des idéalistes² ayant qui séjournés dans le monde arabe, qui acquis une culture arabo-islamique suffisamment solide pour faire la différence entre l'islam des théologiens et juristes musulmans et l'islam tel que pratiqué dans leur terroir et aspirant en tout état de cause à réformer l'islam noir, ces *jihāds* devaient contribuer à faire de l'islam la religion qui compte le plus d'adeptes dans cette région.

Il résulta de ces *jihāds* une solide implantation d'institutions politiques et sociales musulmanes, une augmentation considérable du nombre des lettrés en arabe, une dissémination des centres de transmission de savoir islamique, mais surtout une diffusion des *ṭuruq* dont les leaders avaient été les fers de lance de ces *jihāds*.³ Pour ne citer que les leaders de *jihāds* suivants, rappelons que

¹ Voir David Robinson, *La guerre sainte d'al-Hājj Umar. Le Soudan occidental au milieu du XIXe siècle* (Paris 1988) 53-90.

² Voir Mervyn Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa* (London 1984) 156-171; 227-243.

³ Op. cit. 244-260.

°Uthmān b. Fūdī (Califat de Sokoto), Aḥmad b. Aḥmad (Empire de Masina), Karamokho Alfa (Futa Jalon), al-Ḥājj °Umar al-Fūtī (Empire de Ségou), Ceerno Suleymān Baal (Futa Toro), Maba Diakhou (Sénégalie centrale) étaient tous des fervents adeptes de l'islam soufi. Pour ces derniers et à la différence des réformateurs de l'époque post-coloniale d'inspiration wahhābī ou salafī, la restauration de l'islam dans sa pureté originelle passait surtout par l'erradication des survivances païennes. En aucune façon, n'était mise en cause l'orthodoxie du soufisme, tant l'islam noir était influencé par le modèle maghrébin et nous savons qu'au Maghreb, après la chute de l'Etat almohade et du fait de l'absence d'un Etat musulman fort, les Espagnols et les Portugais menaient des attaques incessantes contre les musulmans et que les ordres soufis furent les fers de lance de la résistance contre les envahisseurs, ce qui contribua à renforcer considérablement leur influence et leur diffusion au Maghreb et ensuite au sud du Sahara.⁴

Les mouvements de réforme wahhābī ou salafī n'eurent pas grand écho en Afrique de l'Ouest avant la deuxième guerre mondiale. Ceci, parce que pendant la période coloniale, les administrations française et britannique avaient établi un cordon sanitaire visant à isoler l'univers sub-saharien du monde arabe afin d'éviter que les mouvements panarabes et/ou panislamistes ne fassent des émules au sud du Sahara. Ce n'est qu'à partir de la deuxième guerre mondiale avec l'augmentation des ouest-africains qui effectuaient le pèlerinage à la Mecque et le retour des étudiants noirs qui ont séjourné dans les Universités d'Egypte et du Maghreb que des mouvements de réforme anti-soufi ont commencé à avoir un écho en Afrique de l'Ouest. C'est à partir de cette époque, et notamment à l'époque post-coloniale, que le polémique sur l'orthodoxie (ou l'hétérodoxie) des *ṭuruq* va avoir une ampleur sans précédent. Notre hypothèse est que cette polémique s'inscrit sur le plan doctrinal dans une tradition de recherche de régénérescence profondément enracinée dans le monde musulman,⁵ tout en étant nourrie par des demandes liées à un contexte donné, ici celui de l'Afrique de l'Ouest post-coloniale.

⁴ Op. cit. 9-11.

⁵ Voir Ernest Gellner (ed), *Islamic Dilemmas, Reformers, Nationalists and Industrialization. The Southern Shore of the Mediterranean* (Berlin/New York/Amsterdam 1985) 1.

Les arguments utilisés par les adversaires des *ṭuruq* sont de plusieurs ordres. Sur le plan religieux, ils ne présentent pas une très grande originalité dans la mesure où ils puisent dans le même registre que les théologiens classiques (voir *infra*). Sur le plan politique et social en revanche, ils ont ceci de spécifique qu'ils sont influencés par des demandes de décolonisation, de modernisation et de rationalisation du sacré qu'engendre un contexte bien déterminé, celui de l'urbanisation et de la naissance de certaines formes d'individualisme. De la même façon que cela s'est produit dans le Monde arabe, les réformistes ouest-africains reprocheront aux *ṭuruq* d'être des alliés du colonialisme et tout comme les réformateurs soufis des dix-huitième et dix-neuvième siècle, ils attaqueront les syncrétismes, qui même s'ils ont été condamnés par quelques leaders de *ṭuruq* africaines, ont été dans l'ensemble tolérés dans le cadre de l'islam noir.

Suite aux *jihāds* déjà mentionnés, les confréries Qādiriyya et Tijāniyya vont solidement s'implanter dans les sociétés du Soudan occidental et central. Les musulmans de cette région s'opposèrent dans un premier temps à l'implantation coloniale. Grand propagateur de la Tijāniyya en Afrique de l'Ouest, fondateur de rameaux de la Tijāniyya dans tout le Soudan occidental et central, Al-Ḥājj ʿUmar al-Fūtī dont le *jihād* a conduit à la création de l'Empire de Ségou, en constitue une illustration parmi d'autres. Toutefois, les musulmans ouest-africains qui avaient choisi de défendre par les armes la *dār al-islām* vont très vite se heurter à la suprématie militaire occidentale. Partout en Afrique de l'Ouest, les opposants furent écrasés. De l'empire de Ségou tombé en 1891 sous les troupes du Commandant Archinard à celui de Sokoto dont l'armée fut vaincue et le Calife Al-Ṭāhir tué en 1903, en passant par la défaite de la ligue tijāni contre l'envahisseur dirigée par Maba Diakhou en 1867, les résistances armées furent vaincues dans tout le Soudan occidental et central.

Suite à cette série de défaites, les musulmans ouest-africains durent redonner un autre sens à la défense de l'islam. Il ne sera plus question par la suite de défendre militairement la *dār al-islām* contre les *kuffār*, mais de défendre la pratique de l'islam. Etait ainsi trouvé le compromis dit colonial qui devait permettre aux *ṭuruq* non seulement de continuer leur prosélytisme, de diffuser l'islam et les *ṭuruq*, mais également de se renforcer considérablement. L'on sait aujourd'hui avec certitude que l'islam dans l'Afrique de l'Ouest n'a pas connu de diffusion plus rapide et plus massive que pendant la période coloniale.

En Sénégal, exposés à l'insécurité liée à la traite de esclaves,

au démantèlement des chefferies traditionnelles par l'entrepreneur colonial et à l'implantation coloniale, les populations s'étaient réfugiées auprès des *shuyūkh* des *ṭuruq*. Du fait de l'audience que ces derniers avaient acquise, l'entrepreneur colonial fit d'eux son intermédiaire vis à vis des populations. Qui plus est, profitant de la mise en place de la voie ferrée, les *ṭuruq* sénégalaises de la Muridiyya comme de la Tijāniyya vont se lancer dans la mise en valeur du bassin arachidier et pour certaines devenir des puissances économiques durables. Au Nigéria, avec la défaite de l'armée de al-Ṭāhir et la soumission du califat de Sokoto, les autorités sultanales ou émiraies furent transformées en personnel bureaucratique colonial.⁶ La Qādiriyya comme la Tijāniyya y étaient associées à l'aristocratie, elle-même intégrée à l'ordre politique colonial. De ce fait, à l'exception de quelques branches jugées subversives de certaines *ṭuruq* et réprimées, les confréries ne s'associèrent en Afrique de l'Ouest, ni à une résistance acharnée à l'ordre politique colonial, ni à la lutte pour l'indépendance. Mieux, bon nombre d'entre elles incitèrent les populations à respecter les lois coloniales, à être loyales envers les colonisateurs et certaines allèrent jusqu'à s'impliquer dans les campagnes de recrutement de soldats pour aller combattre en Europe pendant les deux guerres.⁷

En revanche, ceux qui revendiquaient le réformisme au tout début de celui-ci, évoluaient en majorité en dehors de l'ordre politique colonial et vont attaquer sévèrement cet ordre. Un des exemples en Afrique occidentale française est l'*Union Culturelle Musulmane* (UCM). Créée en 1953, à l'initiative de Cheikh Touré à Dakar, cette organisation était influencée par les idées nationalistes/réformistes du mouvement salafī en Algérie. Cheikh Touré avait fréquenté l'Institut de la *Jam'īyyat al-ʿulamāʾ* de Constantine.⁸ En quelques années et en association avec des jeunes musulmans d'autres pays, furent créées des sections de l'organisation dans la plupart des pays

⁶ Voir Mansur Ibrahim Mukhtar, *The Impact of British Colonial Domination on the Social and Economic Structure of the Society of Kano 1903-1950* (M.A. Ahmadu Bello University 1983) 85 ff.

⁷ Roman Loimeier, *Islamische Erneuerung und politischer Wandel in Nordnigeria. Die Auseinandersetzungen zwischen den Sufi-Bruderschaften und ihren Gegnern seit Ende der 50er Jahre* (Münster/Hamburg 1993) 69-76.

⁸ Voir notamment Roman Loimeier, 'Cheikh Touré. Du réformisme à l'islamisme. Un musulman sénégalais dans le siècle', *Islam et Sociétés au Sud du Sahara* viii (1994) 55-66; Christian Coulon, *Les musulmans et le pouvoir en Afrique Noire* (Paris 1985) 123; 'Abd al-Qādir Sylla, *Al-muslimūn fī 'l-Sinighāl ma'ālim al-ḥādīr wa-āfāq al-mustaqbal* (Doha 1986) 158.

francophones d'Afrique de l'Ouest (Mali, Haute Volta, Guinée, Côte d'Ivoire). A sa création, l'*Union Cultuelle Musulmane* s'assignait pour objectif de purifier l'Islam des déformations et abus qui l'ont défiguré; de réformer l'enseignement et de diffuser la langue arabe; et de lutter contre les influences européennes et chrétiennes. De par ce programme, il apparaît clair que le mouvement prétendait s'attaquer aux intérêts confrériques et coloniaux. Il fut combattu par ces deux forces et fut également l'objet d'une surveillance très rapprochée de la part du fameux Bureau des Affaires Musulmanes qui, à l'époque, était responsable de la surveillance des activités islamiques. Cheikh Touré, dans son pamphlet intitulé *Afin que tu deviennes un croyant*, critiquait en ces termes les *ṭuruq*:

'Si ceux qui se disent les responsables de la religion étaient des croyants sincères, ils ne craindraient pas d'enseigner la vérité, ils n'appréhendraient pas d'indiquer le droit chemin, et ainsi ils n'auraient pas fait de ceux qui les croient les égarés qu'ils sont, ils n'auraient pas à falsifier les principes de l'Islam. Ceux qui se disent les responsables de la religion ne sont pas des croyants sincères, sinon ils n'auraient point, par de fausses interprétations, tenté de légaliser tous les actes courants qui ne sont qu'autant de violations des principes d l'Islam. Leur manque de foi en Dieu les pousse à une honteuse collaboration avec les colonialistes et les capitalistes exploitateurs [...] Nous qui constituons la masse de la population exploitée, trompée et opprimée par le trio : capitalisme, marabouts, colonialistes'⁹

Pendant la décolonisation des pays d'Afrique occidentale française, la France avait proposé à ses colonies de choisir par voie référendaire entre l'adhésion à une communauté franco-africaine ou l'obtention de l'indépendance totale. De tous les pays d'Afrique occidentale française, seule la Guinée avait voté contre l'adhésion à cette communauté. Du fait de leur position privilégiée pendant l'époque coloniale, les leaders des *ṭuruq* votèrent massivement en faveur du "oui" à l'instauration d'une communauté franco-musulmane qui avait pour but de maintenir l'Afrique occidentale française sous l'influence de la France. Les réformistes, eux, firent campagne pour voter "non" à l'adhésion à la communauté française. Leur prise de position vaudra aux *ṭuruq* de prêter le flanc à la critique de collaboration, tout comme certaines *ṭuruq* maghrébines.¹⁰

Les leaders nationalistes qui aspiraient à moderniser leur pays

⁹ Voir Cheikh Touré, 'Afin que tu deviennes un croyant', cité in extenso dans Jean Claude Froelich, *Les musulmans d'Afrique Noire* (Paris 1962) 284.

¹⁰ Voir par exemple Kenneth Brown, 'The discrediting of a sufi movement in Tunisia', dans Ernest Gellner (ed.), *Islamic Dilemmas* 146-167; 147.

étaient sensibles à la propagande de type salafi, d'abord parce que les réformistes étaient plus proches des mouvements nationalistes et ensuite parce que la perspective réformiste était plus proche du projet de modernisation des élites. Au Sénégal, l'on sait que le premier président du Conseil Mamadou Dia s'était assigné comme objectif de soustraire totalement les populations rurales à l'emprise maraboutique. Dans le cadre de cette stratégie, il s'appuya sur les réformistes, soutint notamment l'Union Culturelle Musulmane et faillit faire entrer le leader réformiste Cheikh Touré dans son cabinet en 1958, bien que ce dernier fût absent du territoire sénégalais.¹¹

Ahmadu Bello le premier ministre du Nord-Nigéria avait entrepris au lendemain de l'indépendance du Nord du Nigéria de moderniser l'islam et d'en faire la base d'une politique d'unification du Nord du Nigéria. Abubakar Mahmud Gumi (1922-1992) fer de lance du mouvement réformiste au Nord Nigéria et guide spirituel du *Jamā'at izalat al-bid'a wa-iqāmat al-sunna*¹² était la cheville ouvrière de cette politique panislamiste de Ahmadu Bello.¹³

Même si l'accusation d'hétérodoxie dirigée contre les confréries est nourrie par une argumentation à plusieurs volets, l'on peut néanmoins identifier dans les corpus d'apostolat des réformistes partout en Afrique de l'Ouest un certain nombre de constantes y compris la postériorité de la fondation des *ṭuruq* à l'époque prophétique, la stigmatisation du culte des saints sous ses différentes manifestations, l'accusation de charlatanisme et d'exploitation des masses et la critique des rituels des *ṭuruq*.

L'argument de la postériorité des *ṭuruq* à l'époque prophétique est présent dans le discours réformiste où que l'on se rend en Afrique de l'Ouest. La *Jamā'at izalat al-bid'a* fondé au Nigéria en 1978 est, selon nous, le mouvement réformiste qui compte le plus de membres dans l'Afrique l'Ouest post-coloniale. Son argument principal c'est que les *ṭuruq* n'existaient pas du temps du prophète et à ce titre ne sont pas othodoxes. Un des pamphlets en haoussa qui constitue la base du corpus d'apostolat de la *Jamā'at izalat al-bid'a* détaille ce

¹¹ Roman Loimeier, 'Cheikh Touré' 61.

¹² Sur cette association, voir par exemple O. Kane, 'Izala: The Rise of Muslim Reformism in Northern Nigeria', dans M.E. Marty and R.S. Appleton (eds.), *Accounting for Fundamentalisms* (Chicago 1994) 490-512; et aussi Roman Loimeier, 'Auseinandersetzungen im islamischen Lager', dans Jamil M. Abun-Nasr (ed.), *Muslims in Nigeria. Religion und Gesellschaft im politischen Wandel seit den 50er Jahren* (Münster/Hamburg 1993) 145 ff.

¹³ Voir Loimeier, 'Islamische Erneuerung' 92.

type d'argument:

'Le prophète n'a pas pratiqué la *ṭarīqa*, ses compagnons ne l'ont pas pratiqué, les épigones non plus, leurs épigones non plus, ceux qui croient au prophète non plus; le prophète n'a pas ordonné de la pratiquer. Le prophète a dit que quiconque, après les compagnons, leurs épigones et les épigones des épigones vous apporte quelque chose qu'il dit faire partie de la religion, rejetez cette chose car c'est une innovation et celui qui pratique l'innovation, Dieu n'a agréé ni sa prière, ni son jeûne, ni son pèlerinage. De plus, il est devenu un apostat, il a quitté le droit chemin, consulte la tradition du prophète numéro 40 dans le chapitre 7 du recueil de *ḥadīth* de Ibn Māja. Cette tradition démontre on ne peut plus clairement qu'on ne doit en aucune façon être dirigé dans la prière par celui qui pratique l'innovation, ni manger la viande de bêtes qu'il a égorgées car c'est au nom de Cheikh Aḥmad al-Tijānī qu'il accomplit [les rituels] *lāzim* et *waḥḥa* de la *ṭarīqa* Tijāniyya. Il fait de l'associationnisme en associant quelqu'un à Dieu dans le culte, consulte le glorieux Coran, sourate des jinns, verset numéro 17. Le prophète Muḥammad, paix et salut sur lui, comme tout le monde le sait, a été envoyé pour nous enjoindre à faire la prière, le jeûne, à donner l'aumône légale et effectuer le pèlerinage mais de tout cela il n'y a rien qui soit effectué au nom du prophète Muḥammad, paix et salut sur lui, comme le font au nom de Cheikh Aḥmad al-Tijānī les adeptes de sa *ṭarīqa* qui pratiquent la *waḥḥa*. Parmi les raisons fondées sur la Coran et la Tradition (du prophète) pour lesquelles on ne doit pas prier derrière un affilié à une confrérie, figure l'injonction de Dieu aux hommes de n'être l'adepte d'aucun homme, d'aucun ange, d'aucun jinn et de n'accomplir quelque acte que ce soit en leur nom car cela reviendrait à leur donner préséance sur lui [Dieu]. Dieu a dit que quiconque fait cela est devenu un incroyant: consulte le Coran sourate *āl 'Imrān* verset 80'.¹⁴

Dans les débats et joutes contre les sympathisants des *ṭuruq*, nous avons souvent entendu les prêcheurs réformistes défier ces derniers de citer un seul verset du Coran ou un seul *ḥadīth* accepté comme authentique par les recensements fiables de *ḥadīth(s)* qui légitime la constitution de *ṭuruq*.

Les *ṭuruq*, démontre Mervyn Hiskett,¹⁵ vont à partir du dix-cinquième siècle développer le soufisme spéculatif dans le cadre duquel la vénération du prophète comme *insān kāmil* sera très présente. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Jazūlī dans son *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* en est un exemple. Progressivement, le culte des saints, qui existait déjà, va faire l'objet d'une systématisation sur le plan théologique. Centrale à ces pratiques était la notion de *walī*. Dérivé de la racine arabe *wly* le concept de *walī* renvoie dans le Coran à l'idée de proximité.

¹⁴ Voir Ibrahim Muḥammad Gana, 'Hujjojin da suka hana bin dan tarika salla daga alkur'ani da hadis manzo Allāh' (s.l, s.d.); traduit du haoussa par l'auteur.

¹⁵ Voir Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*.

L'interprétation du concept de *walī* dans la littérature des *ṭuruq*, finira par donner naissance à toute une théorie de la sainteté établissant une hiérarchie des saints et leur conférant des pouvoirs extraordinaires. La conséquence de ces dogmes a été le renforcement du culte des saints, qui avait été déjà condamné plusieurs siècles auparavant par Ibn Taymiyya et d'autres théologiens ḥanbalites. Les réformistes ouest-africains vont s'en prendre à la confiscation de la qualité de *walī* au seul bénéfice des leaders de *ṭuruq*. Un pamphlet écrit en 1971 par un guide de la propagande salafī au Ghana réactualise le débat en ces termes :

'Le mot *wilāya* est polysémique en langue (arabe). Toutefois l'expression coranique *alā inna awliyā'* Allāh lā khawfun 'alayhim wa-lā hum yaḥzanūn wa-kānu yattaqūn (Coran 10/62-63) ne concerne que les pieux croyants, comme Dieu qu'il soit loué et glorifié l'a bien indiqué, le dogme saint, la foi au prophète, paix et salut sur lui, la conformité à la loi divine en public comme en privé, c'est cela la *walāya*. [...] Le gnostique c'est celui qui connaît Dieu qu'il soit exalté tel qu'il s'est décrit et que le prophète, paix et salut sur lui, l'a décrit. Non comme le prétend Aḥmad al-Tijānī que celui qui prend son *wird* devient proche de Dieu (*walī l-lāh*)'.¹⁶

Cet argument qui consiste à contester aux "saints" la capacité d'accomplir des prodiges, considérant comme *walī* tout musulman pieux qui se conforme aux injonctions divines est un argument très ancien car présent dans le discours des muʿtazilites.¹⁷ Cette réinterprétation de la notion de *wilāya* ou *walāya* conduira en même temps à la critique des pratiques liées au culte des saints telles que les pèlerinages dans les tombeaux des saints qui sont répandues dans le monde musulman de l'Inde au Maroc.¹⁸ La réinterprétation de la notion de *walī* entraînera également le rejet de l'intercession des saints. Si l'on sait que la croyance en leur capacité d'intercéder en faveur de leurs disciples est un élément déterminant dans la diffusion des *ṭuruq*, alors l'argument sera très important dans la propagande réformiste.

Une des formes prises par le culte des saints et qui est généralisée dans tout le monde est le pèlerinage au mausolées des grands saints. Cette pratique héritée de l'islam maghrébin consiste pour les pèlerins

¹⁶ Voir 'Abd al-Ṣamad al-Kathinī, *Risālat al-dāʿī ilā'l-sunna wa'l-zājir 'an al-bid'a* (Beyrouth 1978) 11-12 (traduit de l'arabe par l'auteur).

¹⁷ Voir *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden 1974) 629; et la contribution de Florian Sobieroj dans le présent livre.

¹⁸ Voir par exemple Christian Troll (ed.), *Muslim Shrines in India* (Delhi 1988) passim; et Fenneke Reysoo, *Pèlerinages au Maroc. Fêtes, politiques et échange dans l'Islam populaire* (Neuchâtel-Paris 1991) passim.

à venir se recueillir sur les tombeaux des saints, y faire des offrandes et y prier pour la satisfaction de leurs besoins. Cette pratique était courante en Arabie avant la révolte wahhābite. D'après la littérature sur l'islam au Maghreb, elle était très présente avant la propagande salafī. Héritée du Maghreb, ces pratiques étaient fortement enracinées dans l'islam noir. De Aḥmadu Bamba, fondateur de la confrérie mouride au Sénégal, à °Uthmān b. Fūdī, les mausolées de ces leaders de *ṭuruq* font l'objet de pèlerinage en permanence, s'inscrivant dans le cadre du culte des saints lié au bonheur ou à la guérison.

Parce qu'elles furent les agents de l'islamisation du Soudan occidental et central, les *ṭuruq* durent trouver un terrain de compromis entre les croyances qui prévalaient avant la diffusion de l'islam et l'islam légaliste des juriconsultes. Elles durent incorporer un nombre important de pratiques. Ces pratiques incluent la confection d'amulettes, de philtres à partir du lavage de versets du Coran écrits sur une tablette en bois. Toutes ces pratiques entraînent dans une industrie de la prière.¹⁹ De ce formidable marché de la prière, permettant de soigner, de prévenir le mauvais sort, protéger contre la sorcellerie, d'exhausser des vœux, bref de rassurer, les gestionnaires du sacré, en l'occurrence les *ṭuruq*, tiraient un partie non négligeable de leurs revenus. Ces prières pouvaient également inclure des retraites spirituelles (*khalawāt*) effectués sur une commande par des personnes désirant voir un souhait exhaussé. Jusqu'aujourd'hui, et en dépit de la propagande réformiste, la très grande majorité des musulmans (et non musulmans) en Afrique de l'Ouest, ont recours à des degrés divers, aux services de ces gestionnaires de l'industrie du sacré à des fins propitiatoires et déprécatoires.

Si les *ṭuruq* ont pu se diffuser au point qu'à la fin de l'époque coloniale, l'islam dans la plupart des pays d'Afrique Noire s'identifiait à elles, c'est sans aucun doute dû à leur grande capacité de s'adapter aux réalités africaines, de prendre en charge les besoins de sécurité et d'espérances des populations démunies. Les réformistes vont condamner ces pratiques et par conséquent, les

¹⁹ Pour une sommarisation toujours valable de ces pratiques, voir J.S. Trimingham, *Islam in West Africa* (Oxford 1959) 102 ff. Voir aussi M. Last, 'A Note on Attitudes to the Supernatural in the Sokoto Jihad', *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* iv/1 (1967) 3-13; et Lamine Sanneh, *The Jakhanke. The History of an Islamic Clerical People of the Senegambia* (London 1979) 214, 158 ff. et 210 ff.

ṭuruq qui les ont cautionnées. Ils vont les accuser de se livrer à des pratiques obscurantistes à des fins d'exploitation des masses crédules. Dans son ouvrage écrit en 1971 qui marque un tournant décisif dans la propagande réformiste anti soufi, le réformateur nigérian Abubakar Gumi détaille un certain nombre de pratiques connues auprès des *ṭuruq*, les qualifie de magiques avant de les condamner en bloc:

'Le deuxième type [de magie] consiste à invoquer les esprits terrestres, à savoir les djinns et à chercher à entrer en communication avec eux en se livrant à des pratiques magiques telles que l'utilisation de la fumée, de la vapeur, à se dévêtir de ses vêtements [...] beaucoup de personnes la pratiquent aujourd'hui. [...] Le quatrième type renvoie aux pratiques des Qarmates et à leur adorateurs ignorants et naïfs qui croient licite d'inventer des *aḥādīth* destinés à faire désirer quelque chose ou à faire peur. Ils font partie de ceux à propos de qui le Prophète a dit : "quiconque m'attribue des propos que je n'ai pas tenus, sa place est en enfer. [...] Entrent dans cette catégorie les adeptes des *ṭuruq* créées de toutes pièces et ceux qui suivent leurs instincts et prétendent agir au nom de la religion. La religion se limite à ce que Dieu a révélé [...]. Le sixième type est l'assujettissement de l'esprit au cœur. Dans ce cadre, le magicien prétend connaître le nom suprême de Dieu (*ism Allāh al-aʿzam*) et que les djinns lui obéissent et lui sont soumis dans une très large mesure. Si celui qui entend ces propos est crédule et naïf, il y croiera et accrochera son cœur à ces vaines prétentions. La peur (*khawf*) et la crainte révérentielle (*rajāʿ*) se saisiront de ses sens. Si la peur se saisit de quelqu'un qui n'est pas lucide, le magicien peut le manipuler à loisir. On appelle cette pratique *tunbula* qui permet de manipuler les faibles d'esprit. La physiognomonie permet de distinguer les faibles d'esprit des êtres lucides. Si le magicien maîtrise la physiognomonie, il arrive à distinguer ceux qu'il pourra soumettre à son pouvoir de ceux qu'il ne pourra pas manipuler [...] A toutes ces différentes formes de magie, il y a des clients potentiels qu'exploitent les ulama corrompus afin de les tromper, leur soutirer de l'argent d'une manière totalement infondée au nom de la religion'.²⁰

Un certain nombre de pratiques auxquelles Abubakar Gumi fait allusion sont courantes auprès de certaines communautés confrériques d'Afrique de l'Ouest. Dans ce qu'il qualifie de sixième type de magie notamment, il invoque les notions de *khawf*, de *rajāʿ*² qui symbolisent les différentes stations (*aḥwāl*) de l'ascension mystique dans l'islam des confréries.²¹

²⁰ Abubakar Maḥmud Gumi, *al-ʿAqida al-ṣaḥīḥa bi-muwāfaqat al-sharīʿa* (Beyrouth 1971) 31-34. Deux ripostes ont été écrites contre ce livre par deux grandes figures des *ṭuruq* Tijāniyya et Qādiriyya au Nord Nigéria. Il s'agit respectivement de M. S. Kafanga, *al-Minaḥ al-ḥamida fī radd ʿalā fāsiq al-ʿaqida* (Kano 1972) et Nasiru Kabara, *al-Naṣīḥa al-ṣaḥīḥa fī radd ʿalā l-ʿaqida al-ṣaḥīḥa* (Kano 1972).

²¹ Voir Asʿad al-Saḥmarānī, *al-Taṣawwuf wa-manshūʿātuhu* (Beyrouth 1987) 115 ff.

Les réformistes vont également s'en prendre au rituel des *ṭuruq* qu'ils taxeront de non conformes à l'islam. Les deux *ṭuruq* principales de l'Afrique de l'Ouest que sont la Tijāniyya et la Qādiriyya sont toutes les deux dotées de ce type de *awrād* récités qui individuellement, qui collectivement et présentés comme ayant des vertus purificatrices et rédemptrices exceptionnelles.

En ce qui concerne la Tijāniyya qui est la *ṭarīqa* de plus grande diffusion, elle a trois types de *wird*. Le premier individuel, est dénommé *lāzim* et récité le matin et le soir. Le second *wazīfa* est obligatoire une fois par jour, mais une deuxième récitation surrétrogatoire est attestée auprès de certaines communautés tijānīes ouest africaines. Et enfin un troisième type de rituel propre à la Tijāniyya est appelé *ḥaḍra* et regroupe tous les vendredis après-midi les disciples de la Tijāniyya affiliés à une *zāwiya* donnée. A la différence du *lāzim* récité individuellement et dans la discrétion, les deux autres, notamment la *ḥaḍra*, sont beaucoup plus ostentatoires. Les récitants zélés entrent en transe et leur corps effectue un mouvement de balancier rythmé par le ton de la récitation. Le mouvement réformiste *Izāla* qui opère au Nigéria et au Niger a particulièrement attaqué la Tijāniyya pour ces pratiques.²²

Par ailleurs, un certain nombre de prières entre dans la récitation du *lāzim*, de la *wazīfa*, et pendent la *ḥaḍra*. Une de celles-là, la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ*, promue au rang de prière rédemptrice dans la Tijāniyya, ne vient pas du fondateur de la Tijāniyya Aḥmad al-Tijānī, mais du Cheikh Muḥammad al-Bakrī (1492-1545). Elle est d'une importance fondamentale dans la Tijāniyya et a généré une polémique sans précédent dans l'histoire de cette *ṭarīqa*. La traduction française de cette prière est :

'Ô Dieu! Répands tes grâces et ta paix sur notre Seigneur Muḥammad, celui qui ouvre ce qui était fermé, qui clôt ce qui a précédé, qui fait triompher la vérité par la Vérité et qui guide sur le chemin de la rectitude et (répands tes grâces) sur sa famille, selon la mesure qui lui est due, mesure immense'.²³

Selon le dogme tijānī, c'est le prophète lui-même, qui a communiqué les bienfaits de cette prière au Cheikh Aḥmad al-Tijānī, qui aurait vu le prophète Muḥammad non pas en état de songe mais en état d'éveil. L'ouvrage *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī* de °Ali Ḥarāzīm qui est le livre par excellence de la confrérie Tijāniyya attribue les

²² Voir note 12 pour références; et aussi Loimeier, *Islamische Erneuerung* 178 ff.

²³ Traduction de A. H. Ba. Voir Amadou Hampaté Bâ, *Vie et enseignement de Tierno Bokar. Le sage de Bandiagara* (Paris 1980) 231.

propos suivants à Aḥmad al-Tijānī à propos de la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ*:

'Puis il [le prophète] m'a ordonné de recommencer [la récitation de] la prière de l'ouvrante. Lorsqu'il me l'a ordonnée, je lui ai demandé, paix et salut sur lui, quelles sont ses vertus. Il m'a d'abord dit qu'une seule récitation est égale à six lectures du Coran. Puis il m'a dit qu'une seule récitation de cette prière est équivalente à toutes les louanges rendues à Dieu dans l'univers, à toutes les remémorations du nom de dieu *dhikr*, à toutes les supplications petites ou grandes et à 6000 fois le Coran'.²⁴

Ces dogmes, il va s'en dire ont été attaquées par les réformistes arabes. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, dans la fameuse revue *al-Manār*, accusait le fondateur de la Tijāniyya d'avoir conduit des milliers voire des millions d'Africains à "égarement". Muḥammad b. al-Bashīr Ibrāhīmī qui, après avoir dénoncé les différentes promesses sotériologiques de la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* déclarait:

'Existe-t-il un meilleur moyen d'annuler le Coran que cela? Existe-t-il une plus grave atteinte aux rites de l'islam que cela? Existe-t-il une incitation à négliger les rites de l'islam plus effective que la déclaration de ce démagogue (*dajjāl*)? Ô Seigneur, nous savons par ce que tu nous a enseignés que la religion de al-Tijānī n'est pas celle de Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh'.²⁵

C'est dire que cette polémique ne date pas de la diffusion du réformisme en Afrique de l'ouest. Toutefois, l'on peut dire sans crainte de se tromper, que dans l'Afrique occidentale post-coloniale, aucun point de doctrine d'aucune *ṭarīqa* n'a généré de controverse autant que le statut de la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ*. En ce qui concerne le pays Haoussa notamment, la question de la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* a été le cheval de bataille de l'apostolat des réformistes et le fondement de l'excommunication (*takfīr*) des adeptes de la Tijāniyya. L'on peut même faire valoir que beaucoup de disciples de cette *ṭarīqa* l'ont rejetée. Notamment ceux qui sont issus des écoles modernes, car convaincus du bien fondé de la critique réformiste à propos de la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ*. L'auteur de cette communication, qui a effectué de nombreux séjours de terrain en pays Haoussa et assisté à des dizaines de prêches, ne se souvient quasiment pas de prêches où la question du statut de la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* n'était pas mentionnée.

En raison des dégâts que provoquaient les critiques sur la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* notamment, une figure importante de la Tijāniyya nigérienne Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ s'est livrée à un effort remarquable de clarification doctrinale pour réinterpréter la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* et d'autres dogmes de la

²⁴ Voir Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ b. Yūnus al-Ḥusaynī, *al-Takfīr akḥṭar al-bid'a tuḥaddid al-islām wa'l-waḥda bayn al-muslimīn fī Nigeria* (Le Caire 1982) 87.

²⁵ Voir Jamil Abun-Nasr, *The Tijāniyya. A Sufi order in the modern World* (London 1965) 177-179.

Tijāniyya. Il a écrit notamment:

‘Il convient d’attirer l’attention sur le fait que les propos largement répandus selon lesquels la prière de l’ouvrante est égale à six récitation du Coran ou six mille récitation du Coran sont dénués de fondement. Ils sont démentis par d’autres propos du *Jawāhir al-ma‘ānī* tome 1 page 69. Le Cheikh [Aḥmad al-Tijānī] a dit, rapportant les propos du meilleur des créatures, paix et salut sur lui: “Celui qui récite le nom de Dieu suprême obtient 70,000 demeures au paradis et dans chaque demeure, il y aura 70,000 fois tout ce qui existe sur le paradis: vierges, palais, fleuves etc.[...] Il a une rétribution équivalente à six mille récitation de la prière de l’ouvrante. Il a la rétribution de la récitation de la sourate liminaire du Coran (*al-Fātiḥa*). Il a la rétribution de la récitation du Coran [...] Si l’on compare ces propos sur la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* à ce qui est dit plus haut, on découvre une contradiction manifeste car le nom suprême qui est supérieure à la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* est égale en rétribution à une seule lecture du Coran et il est supérieur à la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ*. Alors comment logiquement la vertueuse *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* peut-elle avoir une rétribution égale à celle de six, voire six mille récitation du Coran. Il n’y a aucun doute qu’une seule de ces affirmations est vraie. [...] . Ou bien il s’agit d’une erreur commise par ceux qui ont recopié le manuscrit, ou d’un complot ourdi avec la complicité des maisons d’édition à des fins de falsification et de calomnie. Cela est déjà arrivé avec l’ouvrage *Ya‘sūb al-sirr al-rabbānī fī karāmāt al-Shaykh al-Tijānī* qui avait été écrit par des ennemis du Cheikh. Les fils de Cheikh Aḥmad al-Tijānī en ont pris et brûlé les exemplaires et se sont dissociés de l’ouvrage.[...] Tout lecteur assidu ne saurait douter du fait que l’altération par ajouts ou par omissions, intentionnels ou non intentionnels est un phénomène d’autant plus fréquent que le nombre des maisons d’éditions et imprimeries augmente en permanence.’²⁶

Pour qui connaît l’enracinement de la croyance aux vertus de la *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* dans les dogmes de la Tijāniyya, cet effort de clarification constitue, à n’en point douter, une concession de taille au mouvement réformiste. La réinterprétation du Cheikh Ṣāliḥ, il convient de le faire observer, a été vivement critiquée par d’autres tijānis.

La Qādiriyya, naguère rivale de la Tijāniyya, n’a point été épargnée dans la polémique sur le rituel. Certaines branches de la Qādiriyya, notamment la branche Nāsirīyya (Nasiru Kabara) font usage du tambour dans leur rituel. Elles furent durement attaquées par les réformistes également et il est notoire que sous la pression des réformistes, certains fiefs de la Qādiriyya Nāsirīyya, sans condamner cette pratique, y ont progressivement renoncé,²⁷ de la même manière que certains fiefs de la Tijāniyya, sous les attaques des réformistes, durent condamner les gesticulations et danses

²⁶ Voir al-Ḥusaynī, *al-Taḳfīr* 87.

²⁷ Pour une justification de l’usage du tambour dans le rituel, voir Nasiru Kabara, *Silālat al-miftāḥ* (Kano s.d.).

effectuées au moment de la récitation des litanies.

Pendant les années soixantes, c'est au Mali que le réformisme semblait avoir effectué une plus grande percée en Afrique de l'ouest. Dans la ville de Bamako, de nombreux centres réformistes avaient été établis.²⁸ Ces réformistes étaient en grande partie des commerçants de basse extraction sociales appartenant à l'ethnie Korooko, ayant accompli le pèlerinage à la Mecque où ils se sont imprégnés de la doctrine wahhābite et cherchant à se soustraire du système des castes qui les opprimaient et de l'industrie du sacré dans lequel il ne trouvaient point leur compte.²⁹ Ensuite il y avait des lettrés ayant fréquenté les universités arabes égyptiennes ou algériennes à une époque marquée par la forte diffusion du réformisme. La pensée salafi était représentée par les enseignements du Cheikh Muḥammad ʿAbdūh en Egypte et par la non moins populaire *Jamʿiyyat al-ʿulamāʾ* fondée par le Cheikh ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ibn Badīs en Algérie. Ces derniers, de retour au pays avec une formation au rabais et une méconnaissance de la langue française, eurent du mal à intégrer le marché de l'emploi. La seule alternative pour eux étant de militer pour une plus grande islamisation qui impliquerait plus d'arabisation et en même temps une augmentation des opportunités d'emploi pour eux.

Peu à peu, les enseignements réformistes touchèrent dans de nombreux pays les élites soumises à l'influence occidentale et à la recherche d'un culte plus rationalisé, d'un sacré plus démocratique, d'un mode de vie plus individualiste, et d'un rejet des préjugés issus du système traditionnel de stratification sociale. Là, le réformisme élargissait sa base sociale et la naissance de mouvement tel que la *Jamāʿat izālat al-bidʿa wa-iqāmat al-sunna* au Nigéria qui se diffusera dans les pays environnants, les mouvements comme *Jamāʿat ʿibād al-raḥmān*³⁰ et la *Ḥarakat al-falāḥ li'l-thaqāfa al-islāmiyya*³¹ correspond davantage à ce modèle d'un réformisme

²⁸ Voir Jean Claude Froelich, *Les musulmans d'Afrique Noire* (Paris 1962) 276; Jean-Loup Amselle, 'Le Wahhabisme à Bamako (1945-1985)', *Canadian Journal of African Studies* (1985) 345-355; 356, id., 'Le réformisme de l'islam en Afrique Noire de l'Ouest', *Revue de Défense nationale* (janv. 1961) 77-91.

²⁹ Voir Froelich, *Les musulmans d'Afrique Noire* 272.

³⁰ Voir la contribution de Loimeier dans la présente volume.

³¹ Sur cette mouvement, voir M.M. Kane, 'La vie et l'oeuvre d'al-Hajj Mahmoud Ba Diowol (1905-1978). Du pâtre au patron de la "Révolution Al-Falah"', dans David Robinson et Jean-Louis Triaud (éds.), *Le temps des marabouts. Itinéraires et stratégies islamiques en*

vecteur de modernité qui vise également à moraliser la vie sociale.

A partir des années soixante-dix, le Nigéria prit la relève où les prêches du Cheikh Abubakar Mahmud Gumi avait donné naissance au mouvement réformiste qui compte absolument le plus grand nombre de membres dans toute l'Afrique de l'ouest post-coloniale. Des millions de personnes furent touchés par les enseignements du mouvement *Jamā'at izālat al-bid'a*. Qui plus est, le mouvement *Izāla* devait se trouver à l'avant garde d'un véritable mouvement de modernisation de l'islam, y compris l'islam confrérique. Nombre de leaders confrériques durent réinterpréter le dogme, le rationaliser au maximum pour le rendre plus acceptable à la masse de leurs adeptes ou de ceux qui traditionnellement étaient des clients potentiels. Certains rituels contestés tels les danses, transes, usage du tambour furent abandonnées par certains.

De nombreux entrepreneurs religieux de sensibilité réformiste anti soufi avaient eu accès, à la faveur de la diffusion de la rente pétrolière à des financements provenant de pays ou institutions de bienfaisances arabes pour promouvoir l'éducation. Ils en ont profité pour créer des écoles afin d'y promouvoir un islam orthodoxe. Les exemples sont nombreux, du *Jam'iyyat al-da'wa al-islāmiyya* lybienne, représentée au Nigéria par Aminu d-Dīn Abubakar à la *Ḥarakat al-falāḥ li'l-thaqāfa al-islāmiyya* qui ont fondé des complexes d'éducation religieuse au Sénégal, sans compter la *Jamā'at izalat al-bid'a*. Face à ce développement de l'audience réformiste, les *ṭuruq* qui ont également bénéficié des subventions arabes. Elles ont aussi modernisé considérablement leurs structures, mis l'accent sur l'éducation, ouvertes à tous, contrairement à l'éducation islamique traditionnelle dans laquelle le *taṣawwuf* occupait une place importante. Paradoxalement, la montée du réformisme avait aussi conduit les *ṭuruq* à reserrer leurs rangs et donner l'impression qu'elles se sont renforcées considérablement. Aujourd'hui, la polémique contre les ordres soufis est beaucoup moins violente qu'elle ne l'a été au début du réformisme dans les pays du Soudan occidental ou pendant les années soixante-dix et quatre-vingt dans le Soudan central. Plusieurs facteurs concourent à expliquer celà. D'abord la montée de l'oecuménisme auprès des chrétiens. Ce fait a contribué à la réconciliation entre les *ṭuruq* et les mouvements réformistes au Nigéria à partir des années quatre-vingt-dix et une réduction considérable des antagonismes par rapport à la

période de la fin des années soixante-dix et des années quatre-vingt marquée par des conflits violents et des pertes de vie humaine. Ensuite les tentatives de récupération des mouvements réformistes par les états post-coloniaux. Que ce soit l'*Union Culturelle Musulmane* au Mali³² et au Sénégal, *Izāla* au Nigéria, l'*Union Musulmane Togolaise* au Togo,³³ l'Etat a réussi totalement à domestiquer le leadership de ces mouvements. Pour ce qui est de l'*Union Culturelle Musulmane*, elle a été à ce point noyauté qu'elle est devenue un instrument de promotion de la pensée des leaders des *ṭuruq* au Sénégal. Au cours de la dernière décennie, l'*Union Culturelle Musulmane* a organisé au Sénégal des semaines culturelles commémorant la pensée et l'action des leaders de *ṭuruq* tels que Ahmadou Bamba, fondateur du mouridisme, Abdoulaye Niassé et Malik Sy, grandes figures de la Tijāniyya sénégalaises à l'époque coloniale.

Enfin les réformistes ont dû eux-mêmes finir par se modérer quand ils ont réalisé que l'enracinement du soufisme était tellement profond en Afrique de l'ouest que seul un travail patient et modéré d'éducation pourrait leur permettre de promouvoir le type d'islam puritain qu'ils aspirent de faire régner en Afrique de l'ouest. Ainsi, même des mouvements réformiste de deuxième génération telles la *Jamā'at 'ibād al-raḥmān*, la *Ḥarakat al-falāḥ li'l-thaqāfa al-islāmiyya*, le Groupe *Da'wa* du Nigéria, non seulement se sont modérés, mais envisagent de collaborer avec les confréries afin de pouvoir les moderniser. Le mouvement *Izāla* semblait évoluer dans ce sens, tout en gardant ses propres lieux de culte.

Cette modération s'explique par plusieurs causes. D'abord les *ṭuruq* après s'être opposés violemment ont fini par tolérer les réformistes quand ils ont compris qu'ils avaient acquis droit de cité. La *Izāla* est particulièrement illustratif à cet égard. Ensuite, la base sociale des réformistes s'était considérablement élargie. Le mouvement n'avait pas que des déclassés et des marginaux, mais également des cadres, en grand nombre pour le Nord-Nigéria qui recherchaient la modernité, sans chercher à rejeter totalement les *ṭuruq* dont ils reconnaissent la contribution dans le développement de l'islam, la protection de cette religion pendant la période

³² Sur l'UCM au Mali, voir Lansiné Kaba, *The Wahhabiyya. Islamic Reform and Politics in French West Africa* (Evanston, Ill. 1974) 233 ff.

³³ Sur l'Union Musulmane Togolaise, voir Raymond Delval, *Les Musulmans au Togo* (Paris 1980) 208-224.

coloniale. Il y avait même en outre des clients traditionnels des *turuq* ou des acteurs ayant de liens de parenté avec certaines grandes familles maraboutiques qui commençaient à s'approcher du mouvement réformiste, ce qui ne pouvait se faire que dans le cadre d'une coexistence entre les deux sensibilités. Enfin, les entrepreneurs religieux réformistes vont réussir à s'imposer dans le champ religieux et devenir des notables. Ce nouveau statut de membres de l'"establishment" leur fera prêcher la modération et les poussera à inciter leurs condisciples les plus enclins à la violence à se modérer. L'apostolat réformiste a eu un effet d'entraînement sur l'islam populaire, tout en laissant à ce dernier des larges secteurs, non touchés par la modernisation du sacré.

POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUFI BROTHERHOODS AND THE ISLAMIC REFORM MOVEMENT IN SENEGAL

ROMAN LOIMEIER

In no other country in Africa is the influence of powerful Sufi-brotherhoods, in particular the Tijāniyya and the Murīdiyya, as pronounced as in Senegal. Yet, at the same time the strongest and oldest Islamic reform movement of Francophone West Africa has developed in Senegal. This reform movement came to be known as the *Union Culturelle Musulmane* (UCM) in the nineteen-fifties and has expanded to many parts of West Africa since then. Both the Sufi-brotherhoods and the Islamic reform movement in Senegal, it should be noted, are divided into numerous competing networks and groups. Thus, neither the Sufi-brotherhoods nor the Islamic reform movement should be regarded as homogeneous blocs. Rather they are organized around charismatic leaders, leaders who in the case of the Sufi-brotherhoods are known as marabouts. Throughout the historical development of Islam in Senegal the particular political, economic, and social interests of these charismatic leaders have often proved to be of greater importance than their religious conceptions. Thus, religious discourse and controversies of a purely religious nature between marabouts and reformers have not had durable impact on the political and social development of Islam in Senegal. Since the nineteen-eighties, the ongoing economic and social crisis has also diverted the attention of the majority of the Senegalese population from purely religious topics.

Critical attitudes towards Sufism, Sufi-brotherhoods and marabouts in particular have been important elements in the religio-ideological and political development of many Islamic reform movements such as *al-Ikhwān al-muslimūn* in Egypt, the *Association des 'Ulamā' Musulmans Algériens* and the *Jamā'at izālat al-bid'a wa-iqāmat al-sunna* of Abubakar Gumi in Nigeria. In Senegal as well, religious and political discourse during the nineteen-fifties was characterized by frequent attacks on the *turuq* by the reformers. However, in Senegal the reformers did not condemn Sufism as such but rather criti-

cized the collaboration of the marabouts with the colonial authorities and denounced a number of religious practices of the marabouts which they regarded as un-Islamic. Moreover, criticism of maraboutic practices did not lead to a complete break between marabouts and reformers in Senegal. Thus, Cheikh Touré, the leader of the UCM, never gave up his affiliation with the Tijāniyya:

'Concernant l'affiliation à la tijaniya, en vérité je ne l'ai jamais abandonné dans les années cinquantes, ni avant, ni après. C'est seulement que mes nombreuses activités de l'époque m'avaient empêché d'en pratiquer régulièrement le rituel.'¹

In the nineteen-eighties and nineteen-nineties, explicit criticism of the Sufi-brotherhoods has become negligible. The Islamic reform movement has split-up into numerous organizations and refocused its activities on the improvement of Islamic education and opposition to a secular conception of the state. In the official discourse of the Islamic reform movement the Sufi-brotherhoods are seldom mentioned, while influential marabouts are courted as allies. In addition the Islamic reform movement's anti-secular stance is close to the attitude prevalent in the Sufi-brotherhoods which stresses the need to remain aloof from the corrupt practices of the rulers. Thus, since the nineteen-eighties, it would seem that conflict between the Islamic reform movement and the Sufi-brotherhoods in Senegal was virtually non-existent. Yet, Senegal is a small country in which many conflicts, including conflicts pertaining to Sufism, may assume the form of family quarrels and consequently are dealt with and resolved outside the public arena.

The development of the Islamic reform movement in Senegal was closely linked to modernization and the country's transformation which took place under French colonial rule. Specifically, Muslim notables in the so-called *Quatre Communes*, St. Louis, Gorée, Dakar and Rufisque, had successfully campaigned for the official recognition of Islamic personal law and the establishment of Islamic courts, the *Tribunaux Musulmans*. As *citoyens* of the *Quatre Communes*, Muslims in these communities were entitled to vote and were thus able to influence the election of the *député* of the *Quatre Communes* in the French Parliament. Due to their political importance, the Muslim *citoyens* of Senegal managed to conserve their exceptional political position until independence in 1960. In the nineteenth century in the course of the political development of the *Quatre Communes*, a system came into being which was based on an exchange of ser-

¹ Communication from Cheikh Touré to the author on 23 May 1995.

vices. This system, which also characterized the relationship between the French colonial administration and the Sufi-brotherhoods in the twentieth century, has been described in a comprehensive manner by L.C. Behrman,² D.B. Cruise O'Brien,³ and Chr. Coulon.⁴ In the case of the Muslim community of the *Quatre Communes*, the exchange of services consisted in meting out rewards for votes: Muslim notables sold the votes of their clientele *en bloc* to the candidate for *député* who offered the greatest material as well as political rewards.

Muslim citizens of the *Quatre Communes* attained part of their demands in the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century restricted their activities to cultivating the ritual and cultural life of their communities. Thus, the first reformist associations such as the *Union Fraternelle des Pèlerins Musulmans de l'A.O.F.* or the *Brigade de la Fraternité du Bon Musulman* came into existence in the *Quatre Communes* during the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties. These new associations in particular campaigned for the organization of the *hajj*, the construction of mosques and the improvement of the system of education in the Koranic schools. In addition, they intended to inform the Muslim population about the teachings of Islam and to combat of *bida*^c. Accordingly, they advocated a lower bride-price in order to limit the excessive expenditure associated with marriage, and they campaigned to reduce the costs for naming ceremonies. In the years that followed, Muslim associations modelled on the organizations mentioned above were established in most of the country's urban centers. In Dakar alone the French authorities estimated their number to be more than fifty in 1936.⁵ The leaders of the new associations were often well-known religious scholars originating from the established centers of religious learning in Senegal, such as Pir, Kokki and the Fuuta Tooro, as well as from Mauretania. Although they did not stress their ties with a Sufi-brotherhood, they were usually affiliated with the Tijāniyya. An important feature of the new associations, however, was that they were open to all Muslims. Yet, most of the members of the new organizations were Tijānis, since the Tijāniyya had been well-established in the urban centers since the nineteen-twenties (under the

² *Muslim Brotherhoods and Politics in Senegal* (Cambridge, Mass. 1970).

³ *The Mourides of Senegal* (Oxford 1971); id., *Saints and Politicians* (Cambridge 1975).

⁴ *Le marabout et le prince* (Paris 1981).

⁵ M.H. Diouf, *Contribution à l'étude des associations islamiques au Sénégal* (Mémoire de maîtrise. Faculté de lettres, Université de Dakar, Dakar 1988) 21.

auspices of al-Hājj Malik Sy), and had a strong influence on the activities of the Muslim citizens in these urban centers.⁶

The liberalization of the conditions for admission to the *hajj* after the Second World War favored the creation of new pilgrimage associations in numerous places in Senegal. These pilgrims' associations took over the local organization of the pilgrimage. Returning pilgrims whose numbers went on steadily increasing particularly in the nineteen-forties and nineteen-fifties, often became instigators of further Islamic activities and organizations. Besides these pilgrims, students educated in Arabic countries contributed to the spread of reformist ideas and reformist literature in Senegal. In 1952, for instance, eighteen Senegalese students were studying at al-Azhar University in Cairo. After their return to Senegal they set up the first evening courses in Arabic in Dakar and thus founded the movement of the so-called 'Arabisants'. This movement was seen by the French colonial officer Cardaire as a form of 'résistance à l'assimilation'.⁷

In the context of general politicization of public life in Senegal the activities of the Islamic associations started to overcome their particularistic interests in the nineteen-fifties. The preoccupation with broader political and social issues, in particular the struggle for a modern Islamic system of education, became a foremost concern. The French colonial administration, however, opposed this development and impeded the foundation and evolution of modern Islamic associations. Thus, the activities of the Islamic reform movement acquired a decisively anti-colonial character. Since the marabouts had been important supporters of the colonial system since the nineteen-twenties, the struggle of the Islamic reform movement in Senegal simultaneously became directed against the collaboration of the marabouts with the colonial authorities. The establishment of the *Union Culturelle Musulmane* (UCM) by Cheikh Touré in 1953, led to an intensification of the politicization of the Islamic reform movement in Senegal. The UCM became Senegal's most important reformist group in the nineteen-fifties. With great enthusiasm the UCM campaigned for Senegal's early independence. Under Prime Minister Mamadou Dia's administration (1957-62), ideas of the Islamic reform movement were incorporated into government policies and members of the reform movement, such as Cheikh Touré, came to hold government and administrative posts. Moreover, a number of

⁶ Diouf, op. cit. 22.

⁷ M. Cardaire, *L'Islam et le terroir africain* (Dakar 1954) 146.

demands of the UCM were realized such as the dissolution of the *Bureau des Affaires Musulmanes* (BAM), the department of French colonial administration concerned with control of the Muslim population. The political support accorded to the UCM by the government of Mamadou Dia was connected with Dia's intention to create a politico-religious counterweight against the powerful marabouts. Dia also hoped to gain religious backing from the UCM for his radical program of social reforms which would affect landownership and aimed at depriving the marabouts of their power.

Dia thus supported the UCM primarily for political reasons. He coopted the UCM into Senegal's political system in order to contest the claim of the marabouts that they alone were the spokesmen and representatives of all Muslims. Many marabouts felt threatened by Dia's policies and consequently supported his dismissal by President Senghor in the course of a constitutional crisis in December 1962. The disputes between the Islamic reform movement and the Sufi brotherhoods in Senegal in the nineteen-fifties should thus be seen in the context of these political developments. The combination of religious and political interests likewise explains why some marabouts, such as Cheikh Ahmad Mbakke or Cheikh Tidiane Sy, from time to time supported the UCM: they represented dissident religious and political positions within their *ṭarīqa* and were thus prepared to ally themselves temporarily with the Islamic reform movement, hoping in this manner to win sympathy for their own criticism of the existing power structure.⁸

The religio-political discourse of the UCM in the nineteen-fifties can be summarized under two major headings: the struggle against colonial rule and the struggle against the religious practices of the marabouts which they regarded as un-Islamic. In numerous articles in *Le Reveil Islamique*, the UCM newspaper, representatives of the reform movement demanded an end to French rule, the free development of the new Franco-Arab schools, the closure of the *Bureau des Affaires Musulmanes* and the cessation of the missionary activities of the Catholic Church. In order to popularize its ideas the UCM set up a theater group which produced plays such as *Le cadeau politique*. This play attacked the activities of the BAM which attempted to corrupt the marabouts by awarding them political and material privi-

8 Behrman, op. cit. 77.

leges.⁹ An article by Cheikh Touré, published in July 1954 in *Le Reveil Islamique* under the title 'L'Islam Africain et le colonialisme', may be taken as representative of the discourse of the Islamic reform movement in this period. In his article Cheikh Touré appeals to the rich, the scholars and the leaders of the Muslims to assume their responsibilities towards the Muslim community. Colonialism, according to Cheikh Touré, had initiated a malicious struggle against Islam which in particular relied on the corruption of Islamic education. At the end of each section of his deliberations Cheikh Touré asks rhetorically, 'Aviez-vous réagi, chers pères', castigating the Muslim notables and the marabouts for their inactivity in the face of the threats of colonialism and Christianity.¹⁰

Of major significance for the ideological orientation of the Islamic reform movement in Senegal, however, was a book by Cheikh Touré, published in 1957 under the title *Afin que tu deviennes croyant*. This work met with violent criticism and reactions from the marabouts in Senegal. Some marabouts of the Tijāniyya travelled to Fass Touré, Cheikh Touré's birthplace, in order to express their protest to his uncle, Sérigne Hady Touré, and wrote a letter to the Governor General of A.O.F. demanding Cheikh Touré's imprisonment. However, Cheikh Touré who originated from a family of religious scholars affiliated with the Tijāniyya was not moved by these protests, and refused to withdraw his book.¹¹ The argumentation as it stands in *Afin que tu deviennes croyant* not only reflects the religious program of the Islamic reform movement in the nineteen-fifties but has remained an important source of inspiration for the religious arguments employed by the new Islamic organizations of the nineteen-eighties. Consequently, *Afin que tu deviennes croyant* was re-edited in the form of articles in a new periodical of the Islamic reform movement of Senegal, *Études Islamiques*, founded in 1979, and went through another edition in 1990 under the title *Le vrai et le faux. L'Islam au Sénégal*.

At the center of Cheikh Touré's argumentation is the emphasis on *tawhīd*, God's oneness and uniqueness. *Tawhīd*, according to Cheikh Touré, is the very foundation of the sharia as well as of the total economic, political, social and cultural life of Muslims. Adoration of other things, belief in the marabouts and their amulets as well as in

⁹ Diouf, op. cit. 102.

¹⁰ *Le Reveil Islamique* viii, 1954.

¹¹ Interview with Cheikh Touré, 13 April 1992.

the power of their supernatural blessing (*baraka*), violates the principle of *tawhīd*.¹² In Senegal, however, belief in the special powers of the marabouts and their role as intermediaries between God and the faithful has been widespread. Many Muslims have regarded the graves of the saints as holy places of prayer and have been encouraged in this belief even by present-day marabouts. These ideas were *shirk*, polytheism, the one sin God would never forgive. The present-day marabouts were responsible for the spread of this sin as they taught their students (*talibé*) to believe in a marabout's *baraka* instead of instructing them in the prescriptions of religion. Many *talibé* in fact knew the teachings of the marabouts better than God's message and were therefore prone to believe more in the *baraka* of the marabouts than in the omnipotence of God.¹³

In the context of this line of argument Cheikh Touré also criticises the Sufi-brotherhoods. Without any doubt they constituted an innovation in Islam. They were established as late as the twelfth century and thus cannot be regarded as forming an integral part of Islam. Any Muslim can be a good Muslim without being a member of a Sufi-brotherhood. The *dhikr*, 'recollection of God', is indeed a commendable practice but no Muslim needs an authorization from a marabout in order to practice the *dhikr*. Nevertheless it is useful to have a spiritual master to teach the faithful the prescriptions of religion and to introduce them to the best way to perform the *dhikr*:

'Un tel homme de Dieu, si on a la chance de le trouver, mériterait bien notre confiance... Malheureusement, avec les temps qui courent, grâce à la complicité des pouvoirs publics qui, dans leur lutte contre l'Islam, offrent largement et gracieusement presse, écrite, radio et télévision, à une propagande concurrentielle dégénérée entre confréries..., il ne serait aisé de trouver la juste voie avec un maître digne de confiance'.¹⁴

The practices of the Sufi-brotherhoods were regarded by their followers as being more important than the Koran, and some members even went so far as to pray only behind an *imām* from their own *ṭarīqa*. These characteristics of the Sufi-brotherhoods, an observer might conclude, constituted one of the major reasons for the divisions among Muslims. The Sufi-brotherhoods were a plague on Islam in Africa. According to Cheikh Touré, they were responsible for the weakness of the Muslims and the Muslims' defeat in their struggle against the colonial powers.

¹² Ch. Touré, *Afin que tu deviennes croyant* (Dakar 1957) 19.

¹³ Touré, op. cit. 26.

¹⁴ Touré, op. cit. 35.

The development of the Islamic reform movement in Senegal experienced a deep shock when Dia was dismissed from office and President Senghor took full power in late 1962. The UCM completely lost its influence on government, whereas once again the marabouts became the most important supporters of the regime. The tasks and functions of Cheikh Touré in the Ministry of Information were greatly restricted and he was personally put under the control of Dahiru Doukouré, Senghor's councillor for Islamic affairs. The UCM was brought into line and transformed into a pro-government organization by the incorporation of new members. By establishing a number of other Islamic organizations, in particular the *Fédération des Associations Islamiques du Sénégal* (FAIS), which were supported materially by Senghor's government, Senghor was able to control the development of the Islamic reform movement in the nineteen-sixties and nineteen-seventies. By distributing posts in the educational sector, the diplomatic service and in the administration to selected representatives of the Islamic reform movement, the development of radical protest was suppressed for the time being. However, when the economic resources of the state became scanty due to serious drought in the nineteen-seventies, political protest against Senghor's regime began to make itself heard and the Islamic reform movement experienced a revival.

The initial impulse for the revitalization of a critical and independent Islamic reform movement came about in the course of a 'semaine culturelle' organized by the UCM in 1977. This 'semaine culturelle' was dedicated to the founder of the Muridiyya, Ahmadu Bamba, who had sympathizers among the followers of the Islamic reform movement since they regarded him as a hero in the anti-colonial struggle. The intention of the 'semaine culturelle' was to assess and to appreciate Ahmadu Bamba's efforts in connection with the spread of Islam in Senegal and to examine his role as a teacher of the Muslims: 'L'idée pour nous était simplement de choisir la vie de tel où tel et de l'étudier scientifiquement et de voir là où il y a eu déviation...'¹⁵ However, the majority of the UCM, stressing its loyalty towards Senghor, prevented a critical discussion and took over the organization of the 'semaine culturelle'. In view of this failure Cheikh Touré and his supporters realized that they had to break completely with the UCM in order to dissociate themselves from the tutelage of Senghor's regime. In 1979 Cheikh Touré and his

¹⁵ Interview with Cheikh Touré, 13 April 1992.

supporters left the UCM and founded the *Jamā'at 'ibād al-rahmān*. Since then this new organization has become the strongest Islamic reform movement in Senegal.

As early as 1977, Cheikh Touré once again began to publish articles and pamphlets. His activities included the foundation in 1979 of the new Islamic periodical *Études Islamiques* (EI), mentioned above. This journal became the most important platform of the Islamic reform movement in Senegal in the nineteen-eighties. In contrast to how he had proceeded with *Le Reveil Islamique*, Cheikh Touré behaved with caution in establishing *Études Islamiques*. Even before the journal was set up he met the leaders of the Tijāniyya and the Muridiyya, 'Abd al-°Azīz Sy in Tivaouane and 'Abd al-Aḥad Mbakke in Touba, in order to inform them about his new project. Although the Khalifa Général of the Tijāniyya distanced himself from Cheikh Touré, the Khalifa Général of the Murīds encouraged Cheikh Touré in his endeavor and even granted him financial support.¹⁶

After the flourishing of the UCM in the nineteen-fifties and then the stagnation of the Islamic reform movement in the Senghor era, a third phase in the development of the relationship between the state and the Islamic reform movement began. The event which marked this new phase was the take-over of power by Abdou Diouf on 1 January 1981. But whereas in the nineteen-fifties the struggle against French colonial power and the collaboration of the marabouts had been at the center of the activities of the Islamic reform movement, in the nineteen-eighties Islamic discourse began to emphasize the importance of opposing the secular/'*laïc*' conception of the Senegalese state. In this context it should be stressed that the Islamicist organizations use the term '*laïc*' in its narrow sense of 'anti-religious' rather than using the neutral term 'secular'. The Senegalese government rejects such a narrow definition of its policy, and President Abdou Diouf has indeed publicly declared in an interview with the national daily *Le Soleil*: 'La laïcité n'est ni l'athéisme, ni la propagande anti-religieuse'. He wishes to see Senegal as an Islamic society whose values are *protected and defended* by a secular state. Alternatively, a state policy of Islamization is also impossible since, as stated in the Koran (2/256): *lā ikrāha fī'd-dīn*, 'There shall be no compulsion in religion'.¹⁷

¹⁶ Interview with Cheikh Touré, 27 March 1993.

¹⁷ *Le Soleil*, 31 December 1983.

With the reorientation of the Islamic reform movement in the nineteen-eighties a turning away from exclusively religious topics in the public debate was also to be observed. This development was not only connected with the fact that the Islamic reform movement has almost ceased to criticize the Sufi-brotherhoods, but was also determined by a decrease in public interest in religious topics during Senegal's mounting social and economic crisis. Thus the periodical *Wal Fadjri*, one of the most widely read publications in Senegal, had an explicitly Islamic emphasis at the time of its foundation in 1983. In reaction to the general public indifference concerning religious topics and possibly in response to a financial subsidy from Jean Collin, Secrétaire Général de la Présidence,¹⁸ *Wal Fadjri* changed its editorial policy and since 1988-89 has increasingly given attention to social, political and economically relevant topics.¹⁹ The crisis in the educational system, inflation, the cost of living, corruption, mismanagement, crisis of values, criminality, prostitution, drug-abuse and mimicry of the West — not only *Wal Fadjri* but the new Islamic organizations as well blame the secular orientation of the state for these evils and promote a return to the values of Islam as a solution.²⁰

Another important reason for the new relationship between the Islamic reform movement and the Sufi-brotherhoods was that Cheikh Touré and his supporters, after 1979 and in contrast to the nineteen-fifties, increasingly stressed the importance of the unity of the Muslim community as they hoped to win the marabouts as allies in their struggle against the secular state. This aim was also adopted by most of the other Islamic reform organizations in Senegal. Thus criticism of the Sufi-brotherhoods is rarely to be found in the publications or public statements of these organizations. But this change in discourse and purpose on the part of the new Islamic reform organizations does not mean that fundamental religious differences no longer exist between the Islamic reform movement and the Sufi-brotherhoods. The official *détente* between the Islamic reform movement and Sufi-brotherhoods since the nineteen-eighties is rather one more sign that the overall political framework has changed. Furthermore, the leading exponents of the Islamic reform movement in Senegal had to acknowledge that the marabouts were

¹⁸ Communication from Ousmane Kane to the author, 5 May 1995.

¹⁹ Interview with Sidi Lamine Niass, Editor of *Wal Fadjri*, 7 April 1993.

²⁰ Resolution of the 5th Congress of the JIR, *Le Soleil*, 12 February 1991.

still too strong in political as well as social and economic terms in the nineteen-eighties and could not be fought successfully. As a result they have watered down their criticism of the 'maraboutage' or dropped it altogether since the nineteen-eighties. Thus the Fifth Congress of the JIR confirmed in 1991: 'Il n'y a aucune divergence entre nous et les familles religieuses du Sénégal'.²¹ At the same time the official newspaper of the 4IR, *Le Musulman*, has held up such Sufi scholars as al-Ḥājj ʿUmar Tal, Maba Jaxu, Muhammad Lamin Dramé, Ahmadu Bamba and al-Ḥājj Malik Sy as models for the Muslims in Senegal.²²

The new emphasis in the activities of the Islamic organizations of Senegal has been repeatedly publicized in Islamic periodicals such as the *Études Islamiques*, *Wal Fadjri*, *Le Musulman*, *L'Étudiant Musulman*, or *L'Action Islamique*, and again and again has been clearly set forth in the course of conferences and congresses, and in programs and annual reports of the new Islamic organizations. A statement by Cheikh Touré may once again be taken as representative of the new discourse of Islamic reform organizations. In this statement, published in 1993 in a book entitled *L'Islam en Afrique*, Cheikh Touré attacked the Senegalese political establishment with biting words:

'Aliénés, atteints de suivisme aveugle et de laïcisme anti-islamique, ces imitateurs sont pires que les "ceddos" et les négriers d'hier. Comme eux, ils pillent nos ressources, spolient les travailleurs, mais plus grave, leurs agissements contribuent à maintenir davantage les peuples dans l'état de colonisabilité, de vulnérabilité, de docilité et d'asservissement à l'impérialisme occidental, qui nous les impose.

A l'inverse de leurs maîtres, ils ne croient rien de concepts dont ils se gargarisent: liberté, respect de droit de l'homme, de la femme et de l'enfant, démocratie, égalité, fraternité, laïcité, etc. qu'ils utilisent au seul dessein de combattre leurs opposants, en particulier l'Islam et ses valeurs qui sont devenus à l'évidence parties intégrantes de la culture négro-africaine.

De ce fait, les dirigeants actuels de l'Afrique constituent pour la plupart, l'ennemi numéro un des peuples, les premiers obstacles à leurs aspirations à la liberté, l'unité, la dignité et le développement, et par conséquent, l'opposant le plus hostile à l'Islam libérateur qui, en se mettant au service des peuples ne peut manquer de dénoncer leur trahison criminelle et de résister à leurs tentatives de l'instrumentaliser'.²³

With the change of strategy in the Islamic reform movement, open attacks on the Sufi-brotherhoods have become very rare since the

²¹ *Le Soleil*, 12 February 1991.

²² *Le Musulman* xxxvii, 1991.

²³ Ch. Touré, *L'Islam en Afrique* (Dakar 1993) 5.

late nineteen-seventies. Cautious criticism has only occasionally been expressed between the lines. Thus the custom of celebrating religious holidays separately has been taken up disapprovingly in some instances.²⁴ This custom is explained by the fact that Murīds and Tijānīs were not able to agree upon single dates for events like *Tabaski* (ʿīd al-ḥiṭr) or *Korité* (al-ʿīd al-kabīr). In addition, it has been possible to read in the Islamic publications that the annual pilgrimage to the tombs of Ahmadu Bamba and al-Ḥājj Malik Sy, the *Maggal* in Touba and the *Gammu* in Tivaouane, are doubtless important religious events as are the religious holidays. The faithful, however, were rather more preoccupied with their business affairs than with prayers during these religious festivities.²⁵

Authors such as Cheikh Touré also occasionally address the topic of the divisions within the Muslim community at large and the topic of the Sufi-brotherhoods in particular, and argue that these divisions have contributed to the circumstances which allowed the Senegalese state to impose the secular system of government on Muslims. However, Cheikh Touré no longer pursues his goals by appealing directly to the religious scholars to unite, but instead he has again turned to attacking the secular state and its leaders:

‘C’est le même esprit de concurrence confrérique qui permet aujourd’hui aux néo-ceddos, leurs héritiers, de continuer avec beaucoup plus d’audace et de zèle la sale politique anti-islamique afin d’imposer leur laïcité avec ses corollaires: la débauche et la corruption’.²⁶

From time to time the close cooperation of the marabouts with the secular state is implicitly or explicitly referred to in a critical manner.²⁷ However, such criticism does not form part of an overall attack on the existing system of the exchange of services between the state and the religious leaders. On the contrary, all Islamic reform groups express appreciation for the contributions of the marabouts to the development of Islam in Senegal. Personalities such as Ahmadu Bamba, al-Ḥājj Malik Sy or Ibrahim Niass are presented at their conferences and in their publications as fighters against colonialism and cultural alienation. Thus Ahmadu Bamba in particular is represented as ‘champion de la résistance pacifique sénégalaise’²⁸ or as

²⁴ See *L'Étudiant Musulman* viii, 1992.

²⁵ *Études Islamiques* v, 1980.

²⁶ Ch. Touré, *Le vrai et le faux. L'Islam au Sénégal* (Dakar 1990) 33.

²⁷ See e.g. the cartoon ‘Marabout et politique’ in *Études Islamiques*, xxxiii, 1987.

²⁸ Touré, *L'Islam en Afrique* 17.

'vainqueur des croisés colonialistes'.²⁹ Regarding al-Hājj Malik Sy as well as other marabouts, their endeavours in the field of Islamic education in Senegal are stressed, and the 'soufisme socialisé' of the Tijānī 'ālim Ceerno Muhammad Sayyid Ba and his agrarian community in Madina Gounass (Casamance) is described in a positive way.³⁰ In the statements concerning the historical achievements of the marabouts it is underlined again and again how important their work has been for the 'préservation de la personnalité musulmane'.³¹

Within the Tijāniyya as well as within the Murīdiyya individual marabouts have always been prepared to criticize the development of the state when they felt their immediate interests were threatened by certain state policies. Thus marabouts of both Sufi-brotherhoods turned against the new 'Code de la Famille' in 1966 and 1971, and rejected it as un-Islamic. The Khalifa Général of the Murīdiyya, 'Abd al-Aḥad Mbakke, dissociated himself increasingly from Senghor's regime in the nineteen-seventies and openly criticized Senghor's agricultural policy: 'Les paysans sont fatigués... Je ne peux rien pour vous, sinon vous mettre au courant des doléances du monde rural...'³² Even Seydou Nourou Tall, one of Senghor's most loyal supporters, opposed the enactment of the new family code in an open letter in 1971 and characterized the 'Code de la famille' as being incompatible with Islamic legal norms.³³

In this context one must bear in mind that there have always been certain marabouts in the historical development of Islam in Senegal who maintained their distance from princely courts and political power. These marabouts, the so-called *Sérigne Fakk Tall*, the 'marabouts who go out into the bush to cut their own firewood', dedicated their life to the teaching of Islam and often became leaders of local resistance movements opposing arbitrary actions of the feudal lords who were supported by the '*Sérigne Lamb*', the 'marabouts of the drum'.³⁴ Both types of religious scholars continued to exist in the twentieth century, the *Sérigne Fakk Tall* for instance in the form of the agricultural community of Madina Gounas mentioned above.

²⁹ *Études Islamiques* iv, 1980.

³⁰ *Études Islamiques* vii, 1980.

³¹ Touré, op. cit. 17.

³² *Le Soleil*, 23.6.1980.

³³ Rawane Mbaye, *L'Islam au Sénégal* (Thèse de 3ème cycle. Faculté de lettres. Université de Dakar, Dakar 1976) 565-9.

³⁴ A. Samb, *Contribution du Sénégal à la littérature d'expression arabe* (Dakar 1972) 25.

This religious community, founded by Ceerno Muhammad Sayyid Ba in 1935, became famous for its deliberate isolation and has been regarded by some Muslims as an alternative model for the development of Senegal. The community started to disintegrate, however, when Ceerno Muhammad Sayyid Ba consented to cultivate cotton for the state-owned *Société de Développement des Fibres Textiles* (SODEFITEX), and thus accepted the community's integration into the Senegalese monetary system in 1975. In the nineteen-eighties Madina Gounass was completely 'invaded by *bida*'.³⁵ A modern bakery was opened in 1983, many young girls started to refuse the *hijāb* and chose to wear jeans, the faithful started to smoke cigarettes and in 1984 a post-office was established and electricity installed, thus definitely ending Madina Gounass' splendid isolation.³⁶

In their endeavour to win over the marabouts to a common stance against the secular state, the new Islamic groups gave important marabouts the opportunity to express themselves in print. Thus, besides a homage to Sérigne Mbakke Médina, son of Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Mbakke, an article by °Abd al-°Azīz Sy Jr., in which he expresses his ideas on the 'aggression intellectuelle contre l'Islam et les moyens de résistance', is to be found in *Études Islamiques* xxvii (Sept. 1985). Public declarations by leaders of the Sufi-brotherhoods were repeatedly published on the occasions of the *Maggal* and the *Gammu*,³⁷ in particular when these statements contained some criticism of the state. *L'Étudiant Musulman* also published an appeal by the Khalifa Général of the Murīds, Saliou Mbakke, on the occasion of the *Maggal* of 1992, complaining about growing public immorality and the decay of values.³⁸

In their efforts to fight against the secular state the Islamic organizations have tried everything possible to draw the influential marabouts into supporting them. Cheikh Touré wrote the following statement about the marabouts in an article originally published in 1989 under the title 'Perspectives de l'application de la charia en Afrique Occidentale Francophone':

'La vérité est que les oulémas, cheikhs et chefs religieux, qui se sont de tout temps opposés à la laïcité en appelant au respect des commandements de l'Islam, sont nombreux... Ces confréries — même si elles ont un peu dévié aujourd'hui de leur enseignement originel sur

³⁵ M. Magassouba, *L'Islam au Sénégal. Demain les Mollahs?* (Paris 1985) 52.

³⁶ Ibid. 53.

³⁷ See *Études Islamiques* xii, 1982, or *Études Islamiques* 24, 1984.

³⁸ *L'Étudiant Musulman* viii, 1992.

lesquelles elles ont été fondées, si certaines d'entre elles se sont impliquées jadis dans la collaboration avec le colonialisme et maintenant avec les états nationalistes laïcs — elles ont joué dans leur première époque des rôles appréciables dans la résistance aussi bien armée que pacifique. En particulier sur le plan de la conservation de la foi et de la personnalité des africains contre les tentatives de christianisation et d'assimilation'.³⁹

The new strategy of the Islamic reform movement in Senegal in dealing with the Sufi-brotherhoods has stressed peace and harmony, and the desire to unite Muslims against the secular state. The result of this strategy is that no religious conflict between the new Islamic organizations and the Sufi-brotherhoods presently exists in Senegal. Even on occasions when some students of the *Association des Étudiants Musulmans* of the University of Dakar, an organization connected with the *Jamā'at 'ibād al-raḥmān*, voiced radical criticism of the Sufi-brotherhoods and attacked the marabouts, leading representatives of the Islamic organizations have usually rejected such utterances as being unrepresentative. The political primacy of the struggle against the secular state has led the Islamic reform movement away from a critical position towards the Sufi-brotherhoods. The change in strategy of the new Islamic organizations has also been motivated by the real economic interests of these groups. They know that permanent attacks on the marabouts, who continue to constitute an important support for the Diouf administration, would endanger the state subsidies to their schools and thus threaten their social activities. These developments show that holy men, reformers and the state are not necessarily doomed to be enemies but that their relationships are influenced by a multitude of personal, economic, political and social factors. Religious bones of contention between different groups are brought forward or reactivated when the need arises, and they may as quickly be buried again once the need for them no longer exists.

The Islamic reform movement in Senegal, for political reasons, has given up its fight against the marabouts for the time being. The new Islamic organizations, in particular the JIR, are winning growing support in the country's urban centers, and have considerably increased their educational efforts. They have established numerous new Franco-Arab schools all over Senegal, especially in the big cities. Many students who graduated from universities in Arabic countries and who did not have the good fortune to find employment

³⁹ Touré, *Le vrai et le faux* 18.

in the service of the Senegalese state, have now found jobs in these schools. The educational initiatives of the Islamic reform movement have also been supported by the state, which rightly looked upon the new Franco-Arab schools as a means to reduce teacher unemployment and by implication to ease social tensions. Furthermore, by supporting the modern Islamic educational system the Senegalese state can represent itself to the rich Arab donor countries as an 'Islamic' state. Finally, support for the Islamic reform movement has been seen as a way 'de court-circuiter l'influence des marabouts': The state can establish new channels of access and communication to the populace independent of the influence and the mediation of the marabouts.⁴⁰ This constellation of factors along with party-political support has allowed the government of Abdou Diouf to integrate the new Islamic reform movement into the 'jeu politique',⁴¹ while limiting attacks on the secular state to verbally radical statements in the publications of the new Islamic organizations.

⁴⁰ M. Fall, *Sénégal: l'État sous Abdou Diouf ou le temps des incertitudes* (Paris 1986) 69.

⁴¹ Interview with Ousmane Paye, Councillor to the President, 13 April 1993.

SUFISM AND ITS OPPONENTS IN NIGERIA: THE DOCTRINAL AND INTELLECTUAL ASPECTS

MUHAMMAD S. UMAR

Sufism has played significant roles in the historical development of Islam in the areas of present-day Nigeria.¹ In the Sokoto *jihād* at the turn of the nineteenth century, °Uthmān b. Fūdī and his lieutenants based the legitimacy of their leadership on Sufi doctrines such as *kashf*, *walāya*, *karāma*, and *baraka*. They also employed the Qādiriyya to organize mass support and consolidate communal identity. Early in the twentieth century, the Tijāniyya spread widely throughout Northern Nigeria at the expense of the Qādiriyya. By the nineteen-fifties, the Qādiriyya and Tijāniyya had become competing alternatives not only for Sufi devotion, but in the economic and political sphere as well. The nineteen-sixties witnessed the beginnings of opposition to certain aspects of Sufi practices. This opposition was popularized from the nineteen-seventies onward by a Wahhābī-oriented movement called *Jamā'at izālat al-bid'a wa-iqāmat al-sunna*. It developed opposition into a sustained critique against the doctrinal foundations of Sufism.

The social, political and economic aspects of these developments have been studied by numerous scholars.² But a significant aspect that has not received as much scholarly attention is the doctrinal dispute between the Sufis and their opponents. This chapter calls attention to the large polemical literature produced by the Sufis and their

¹ See also the contribution by Ousmane Kane in the present volume, pp. 324 ff.

² Some of the many titles are: P.H.G. Scott, *A Survey of Islam in Northern Nigeria in 1952* (Kaduna 1953); Aliyu Abubakar, *al-Thaqāfa al-°arabiyya fī Nigeria* (Beirut 1972); John N. Paden, *Religion and Political Culture in Kano* (Berkeley 1973); Ibrahim Tahir, *Scholars, Sufis, Saints and Capitalists in Kano* (Ph.D. Diss., Cambridge University 1975); Y.A. Quadri, *The Tijaniyya in Nigeria* (Ph.D. Diss., University of Ibadan 1981); A.F. Ahmed, *The Qadiriyya and its Impact in Nigeria* (Ph.D. Diss., University of Ibadan 1986); M.S. Umar *Sufism and Anti-Sufism in Nigeria* (M.A. Diss., Bayero University 1988); Awwal Anwar, *Struggle for Influence and Identity: The Ulama in Kano, 1937-1987* (M.A. Diss., University of Maiduguri 1989); O. Kane, 'Izala: The Rise of Muslim Reformism in Northern Nigeria', in M.E. Marty and R.S. Appleby, (eds.), *Accounting for Fundamentalisms* (Chicago 1994), 490-512; and R. Loimeier, *Islamic Reform and Political Change in Northern Nigeria* (Evanston 1997).

opponents in Nigeria.

The earliest extant treatise on Sufism by a Nigerian author dates back to the Sokoto *jihād* at the turn of the nineteenth century, though there were a number of well-known Sufis during the two centuries before the *jihād*.³

The influence of Sufism on the leaders of the Sokoto *jihād* and the social and political roles of the Qādiriyya have been documented for some time now,⁴ but the specific Sufi ideas and doctrines that were so influential during the Sokoto *jihād* have scarcely been examined despite the numerous works on Sufism written by all the leading participants in the *jihād*.

Among these works, one of the most interesting is *Kitāb al-tafrīqa bayn al-taṣawwuf alladhī li'l-taḥaqquq wa'lladhī li'l-takhalluq* by °Uthmān b. Fūdī (1168-1232/1754-1817). In this work, Ibn Fūdī defined ethical Sufism as the position of *iḥsān* and likened it to the spirit of the body of Islam. He lists four components of ethical Sufism: preaching; acts of purification and improvement of one's *ḥāl* by cultivating praiseworthy attributes in the inner self and cleansing it of blameworthy attributes; improving one's *ḥāl* and relations with others; learning and divine gnosis. Every Muslim should cultivate ethical Sufism for individual edification. Ibn Fūdī articulates this point thus:

'When Almighty God says He would not accept *kufr* from His servants, it becomes imperative for the principles of *īmān* to be realized fully. And when He says that if His servants show gratitude, He will accept that, it becomes imperative to realize what constitutes gratitude, and that is abiding by the rules of *fiqh* with which one knows the position of Islam, and without which no Islamic rites can be correct. Thus there can be no Sufism without *fiqh*... And that is why it is said he who knows Sufism but does not know *fiqh* becomes a *zindīq*, and he who knows *fiqh* but does not know Sufism becomes a *fāsiq*. But he who combines the two is the one who knows the *ḥaqīqa*'.⁵

Thus Ibn Fūdī advances a Ghazalian model of *ḥaqīqa* and sharia as two necessary complements of the totality of Islam. Ibn Fūdī's con-

³ J.O. Hunwick, *Arabic Literature in Africa II: The Writings of Central Sudanic Africa* (Leiden 1996), Chapter one. See also H.T. Norris, *Mystics of the Niger Desert: Sidi Maḥmūd and the Hermits of Air* (Oxford 1990).

⁴ For example, see the bibliographical essay in John N. Paden, *Ahmadu Bello: The Sardauna of Sokoto* (London 1985) 729-60.

⁵ °Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Kitāb al-tafrīqa bayn al-taṣawwuf alladhī li'l-taḥaqquq wa'lladhī li'l-takhalluq*, MS No 121, Post-Graduate Research Center, Bayero University Library, Kano, fol. 1-2.

ception of this complementarity can be seen even more clearly in his magnum opus, *Ihyā' al-sunna*, which even though cast in the standard format of *fiqh*-textbooks, has a section dedicated specifically to Sufism.⁶ Here again, he identifies Sufism as *ihsān*, which he in turn defines as every Muslim imitating what the Prophet Muḥammad used to do. He then quotes the famous *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet was reported to have said that *ihsān* means worshipping God as if one could see Him. For even if you do not see Him, He sees you. For Ibn Fūdī, *ihsān* also entails fear of God which leads one to avoid acts that are forbidden or frowned upon in Islam, and to regard avoiding forbidden acts as more important than obeying commands, for it is a principle of *sharʿ* that to prevent *mafasid* is better than to realize *maṣāliḥ*.⁷

Ibn Fūdī's conception of ethical Sufism was by no means confined to intellectualism alone. His son, Muḥammad Bello (d.1837), described the content of what his father used to teach students and preach to the public about Sufism as follows:

'He used to say know that the attributes of the heart are of two types: destructive (*muhlikāt*) and redemptive (*munjiyāt*). The destructive attributes are arrogance, vanity, jealousy, stinginess, hypocrisy, love of prestige and wealth, boastfulness, ambitiousness, and viewing Muslims with suspicion. These ten destructive attributes are among the most blameworthy. It behoves every Muslim to avoid them, and to adopt the redemptive attributes, which are: repentance, sincerity, patience, asceticism, dependence on God, contentment with whatever He decides, hope, and fear of God'.⁸

In his *Kitāb al-tafrīq*a Ibn Fūdī did not say much about mystical Sufism. He only observed that mystical Sufism is reserved for contemplative gnostics and their disciples, and that the accomplished mystical Sufis disagreed on whether it should be open to non-specialists. To understand Ibn Fūdī's conception of mystical Sufism, we should turn our attention to another treatise he called *Wa-lammā balaghtu* which describes the powerful influence of Sufi doctrines, and the role of the Qādiriyya in the conception and execution of the Sokoto *jihād*.

In this work, ʿUthmān b. Fūdī explains that he had first had a vision (*kashf*) in 1790 at the age of thirty-six, and then a second one at the age of forty. During the first *kashf*, God had removed the veil

6 ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Ihyā' al-sunna wa-ikhmād al-bidʿa* (Sokoto n.d.) 244 ff.

7 Ibid.

8 Muḥammad Bello b. ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Infāq al-maysūr fī tārikh bilād al-Takrūr* (Cairo 1964) 80-81.

from his sight and taken away deafness from his ears, thus enabling him to discover the Qādiriyya *wird* written on one of the ribs on his right side, and allowing every part of his body to know the secret deposited in it. Ibn Fūdī further stated:

'I came to see the distant as if it were near, hear the far-away as if it were near, smell the aroma of he who worships God to be sweeter than anything I had ever smelled, and sin to be a greater stench than any other. I came to know *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* by the reaction of my taste. I (can) take with my hand what is far-away while I remain sitting in one place. I traverse distance(s) which a strong horse cannot cover in years'.⁹

In the second *kashf* at the age of forty, Ibn Fūdī was taken up to the Divine Presence of Almighty God where he met the Prophet Muḥammad, his Companions, and other prophets and saints. After he was welcomed and seated in their midst, the *ghawth* of the domains of men and spirits, °Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī, appeared in a green robe decorated with *kalimat al-shahāda*, and a turban embroidered with chapter 112 of the Koran. The Prophet took the green robe and the turban, embraced them for about an hour, and then passed them on to be circulated among Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, °Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, °Uthmān b. °Affān, °Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and the Prophet Yūsuf, who finally returned the robe and the turban to °Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī. Then all of them joined to dress al-Jilānī in his turban, and told al-Jilānī to do the same to Ibn Fūdī, and to give the latter a name that would be unique to him. Al-Jilānī acted accordingly, and named Ibn Fūdī *Imām al-awliyā*². After this consecration:

'He (al-Jilānī) enjoined on me (Ibn Fūdī) to command what is good and to forbid what is reprehensible. He decorated me with the Sword of Truth, and ordered me to unsheathe it against the enemies of God. Then all together they bade me to do what he had commanded me; they gave me the authority to spread the *wird* written on my rib and promised that whoever practices the litany will be saved by God'.¹⁰

In addition to these references to al-Jilānī, Ibn Fūdī wrote several works dealing specifically with the life, *karāma* and *baraka* of al-Jilānī, as well as the enormous spiritual benefits of the Qādiriyya. Two of the most important benefits are: the guaranteed salvation of the reciters of the Qādiriyya *wird*, no matter how many sins they may have committed, and the superiority of their *wird* over that of all

⁹ °Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Wa-lammā balaghtu sitta wa-thalathīn sana*, MS No. 14, Post-Graduate Research Center, Bayero University Library, Kano, f. 1.

¹⁰ Ibid.

other Sufi orders.¹¹

It should be pointed out that Ibn Fūdī was not the only Sufi, nor the only one writing about Sufism, during the Sokoto *jihād*. His brother ʿAbd Allāh and his son Muḥammad Bello were known to be *awliyāʾ*; a close associate, Muḥammad Koiranga, regularly experienced *kashf* and acted as a link between Ibn Fūdī and al-Jilānī.¹² There were also a number of women noted for their Sufism,¹³ of whom only Ibn Fūdī's daughter, Nana Asmāʿ, has yet been studied.¹⁴

Although a number of Qādirīs were known in Hausaland before the *jihād* of Ibn Fūdī,¹⁵ his strong identification with al-Jilānī has led one authority to describe Ibn Fūdī as 'undisputably the most prominent Qādirī known in the history of the area',¹⁶ who rose from being an ordinary *murīd* to become a *qutb*.¹⁷ Equally important was the construction of a communal identity for Ibn Fūdī's followers as *Qadirawan Shehu*-Hausa for the Qādirī community of Ibn Fūdī. Paden thinks that this Qādirī identity originated from the convention adopted by Ibn Fūdī of addressing many of his treatises to 'Companions of ʿAbd al-Qādir'.¹⁸ This Qādirī communal identity has been subsequently sustained by the belief that Ibn Fūdī said it is not permissible for any of his followers to leave the Qādiriyya for any other order. It was in view of this belief that some have dismissed the claim that Muḥammad Bello, son and successor of Ibn Fūdī, converted to the Tijāniyya when it was first introduced into the Sokoto Caliphate during his reign.¹⁹

¹¹ Of all the Sufi ideas and doctrines, *walāya*, *karāma* and *baraka* were more widespread and historically influential primarily because together they provided legitimacy for the leaders of the Sokoto *jihād*. It has been argued that the deployment of these doctrines intended to induce a belief in God's approval of the leadership of the Sokoto *jihād*, which would make victory in battle possible with a minimum of fighting or none at all. Cf. F.H. El-Masri et al., 'Sifofin Shehu: An Autobiography and Character Study of Uthmān b. Fūdī in Verse', *Research Bulletin, Center for Arabic Documentation* (University of Ibadan) ii, No 1 (1966) 1-36.

¹² Murray Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate* (London 1967) 20.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Jean Boyd, *The Caliph's Sister, Nana Asmā'u, 1793-1865: Teacher, Poet and Islamic Leader* (London 1989).

¹⁵ Ahmad, *Qadiriyya* 160 ff. Cf. A.A. Batran, 'The Kunta, Sidi al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī, and the Office of *Shaykh al-Tariqah al-Qadiriyyah*, in R. Willis ed., *West African Islamic History* (London 1979) 113-46.

¹⁶ Ahmad, *Qadiriyya* 173.

¹⁷ Abubakar, *al-Thaqāfa al-ʿarabiyya* 200.

¹⁸ Paden, *Religion* 68.

¹⁹ Mahmud Minna, 'Bello and the Tijaniyya: Some light about the conversion

The Tijāniyya was first brought to Nigeria by al-Hājī °Umar Tall (1794-1864) who stopped over in Sokoto on his way to Mecca. On his return he stayed briefly in Borno and made a few converts to the Tijāniyya. He then moved to Sokoto and was well received by Sultan Muḥammad Bello, who gave his daughter in marriage to al-Hājī °Umar. Because of the strong influence of the Qādiriyya in Sokoto, °Umar Tall did not win many converts to the Tijāniyya, and in fact had to leave Sokoto after the death of Muḥammad Bello in 1837.²⁰

However, °Umar Tall did make one important convert in the person of Moddibo Muḥammad Rājī. As the *wazīr* to °Abdallāh b. Fūdī and the chief administrative officer of the southern half of the Sokoto Caliphate, Modibbo Rājī had to keep secret his conversion from the Qādiriyya, the official Sufi order in the Caliphate. Nonetheless, the conversion of Rājī was crucial for the historical development of the Tijāniyya. When he could no longer conceal the fact that he did not belong to the official Qādiriyya, Rājī left Gwandu, the southern capital, and took with him his family, servants, students and followers, who upon arrival in Adamawa in 1855 formed the nucleus of a community whose members 'were distinct by virtue of their Tijāniyya inclination, while the bulk of the other Muslims were (followers of the) Qādiriyya'.²¹

Following Rājī's death in 1862, his two sons, Usmanu and Murtala, carried on the legacy of their father which made Adamawa the major center of the Tijāniyya during the second half of the nineteenth century. It was only after the fall of Segou in 1890 that Tijānī refugees arrived in Sokoto and laid the foundations of what were later to become Tijānī strongholds in the major cities of the Sokoto Caliphate, especially Kano and Zaria. Paden has documented the details and the mechanics of the development of the Tijāniyya in Nigeria during the first half of the twentieth century.²² I will therefore confine my analysis to outlining the historical development of Tijānī doctrines in Nigeria up to the emergence of anti-Sufism in the nineteen-fourties.

It is not clear to what extent the doctrines °Umar Tall expounds in his *Rimāḥ* were known in Nigeria during the nineteenth century, for

controversy', *Kano Studies*, NS, ii (3) (1982-1985) 1-18.

²⁰ Jamil Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World* (London 1965) 107-9.

²¹ Sa'ad Abubakar, 'The Foundation of an Islamic Scholastic Community in Yola', *Kano Studies*, NS, i (3) (1978) 31.

²² Paden, *Religion*, passim.

the work was completed in 1845, about a decade after he had left Sokoto. But even if his ideas were only in rudimentary form while he was still in Sokoto, °Umar Tall was acquainted with the major Tijānī classic, *Jawāhir al-ma°ānī* by °Alī Ḥarāzim Barrāda. In fact, even before his first visit to Sokoto, he had already studied the doctrines of the Tijāniyya, and his instruction is said to have been completed in Mecca by Sidī Muḥammad al-Ghālī, a close companion and deputy of the founder of the Tijāniyya.²³ Thus it can be assumed that since °Umar Tall was well-acquainted with Tijānī doctrines, he may have introduced them into the Sokoto caliphate from at least the eighteen-thirties. However, at present we have no evidence of how these Tijānī doctrines may have been received until towards the end of the nineteenth century when a controversy arose regarding the superiority of the Qādiriyya and the Tijāniyya as reflected in the *Rad° al-jahala* by °Alī b. °Abd Allāh. °Alī b. °Abd Allāh, who was emir of Kano from 1894 to 1903 when he was deposed by the British upon their conquest of Kano, stated that his intent in composing the work was to 'counsel and alert the *Jamā°a °Uthmāniyya* and other fellow believers, and to guide those who claim that anyone of the *awliyā° allāh* could be better (*afdal*) than the Greatest Axis (*al-quṭb al-a°zam*)'.²⁴ The Greatest Axis according to Emir °Alī was of course °Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, for he quoted Sidī al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī in arguing that the Qādiriyya *wird* can replace all the other *wirds* but it cannot be replaced by any other.²⁵ Moreover, he emphasized that °Uthmān b. Fūdī and all his disciples and followers had remained Qādirīs, as is clearly reflected in their writings and in all the traditions transmitted about them. He also dismissed out of hand Sultan Muḥammad Bello's alleged conversion from the Qādiriyya to the Tijāniyya.²⁶

As the Tijāniyya gained more adherents during the first decades of the twentieth century, the Tijānī ulama reasserted the superiority of their *ṭarīqa* over all others, and when Ibrāhīm Niass won the allegiance of some of the Kano Tijānīs, the controversy became more complicated: an intellectual duel took place between the Niassene Tijāniyya and other Tijānīs over rituals and Niassene doctrines. The

23 Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya* 107-108.

24 °Alī b. °Abdallāh (Aliyu Babba), *Rad° al-jahala al-ṭalaba °an al-ḥawḍ fi aḥwāl al-sāda al-khayara wa-°an al-dukhūl fi ṭuruqātihim wa-ḥubb al-jāh wa'l-°uluww*, Ms. John Hunwick, No. 273/MSX, Northwestern University Library, n.d., f. 1.

25 Ibid. f. 6.

26 Ibid. ff. 10-11.

outcome was the production of a substantial polemical literature among the Tijānīs on the one hand and between Tijānīs and Qādirīs on the other, which dominated the intellectual landscape in Kano for the better part of the nineteen-twenties to the nineteen-sixties. Nigerian Tijānīs drew heavily on Tijānī classics introduced into Kano by al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. °Uthmān al-°Alamī in 1923,²⁷ who also taught his own *Durra kharīda*, a commentary on *al-Yāqūta al-farīda*, a work by his teacher Muḥammad Faṭḥa al-Nazīfī.

The Tijānī literature produced by Nigerians to begin with arose out of a need to simplify the doctrines set forth in the Tijānī classics. The repeated assurances in these classics that the Tijāniyya had superseded all other Sufi orders came up against the same claim Ibn Fūdī had made earlier regarding the Qādiriyya. I have already alluded above to the belief that Ibn Fūdī had said it was not permissible for any of his followers to leave the Qādiriyya for any other order, and that this belief provided the ideological basis of the Sokoto communal identity of *Qadirawan Shehu*. It was out of the dispute between the Qādiriyya and Tijāniyya over their respective superiority that Sufi polemical literature was produced by Nigerian authors. Let us now briefly sketch some aspects of the Tijānī doctrines found in the two major Tijānī classics, *Jawāhir al-ma°ānī wa-bulūgh al-amānī fī fayḍ sayyid Abī°l-°Abbās al-Tijānī* and *Rimāḥ ḥizb al-Raḥīm °alā nuḥūr ḥizb al-raḥīm*. I will confine my attention to the doctrines that became the bone of contention, first between Tijānīs and Qādirīs, and then later between Tijānīs and the anti-Sufis.

The authorship of the *Jawāhir al-ma°ānī* has long been part of the dispute between the Tijānīs and their opponents.²⁸ The Tijāniyya position is that this work was dictated to °Alī Ḥarāzīm by Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1815) after the Prophet Muḥammad inspired the latter to do so.²⁹ Opponents have made accusations of plagiarism, to which there have been a number of responses by the followers of Aḥmad al-Tijānī.³⁰

Of all the doctrines propounded in *Jawāhir al-ma°ānī*, perhaps the most contentious in the polemic between the Tijānīs and their op-

²⁷ Paden, *Religion* 86-89.

²⁸ Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya* 24-25; cf. the article by Bernd Radtke in this volume, p. 168 f.

²⁹ Hence the citation of the work is: °Alī Ḥarāzīm b. al-°Arabī Barrāda al-Maghribī al-Fāsī, *Kitāb Jawāhir al-ma°ānī wa-bulūgh al-amānī fī fayḍ Sayyid Abī°l-°Abbās al-Tijānī* (Cairo 1908). *Rimāḥ ḥizb al-Raḥīm* by °Umar b. Sa°id al-Fūtī is published in the margin.

³⁰ Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya* 23-26.

ponents concerns what Aḥmad al-Tijānī claimed to be the source and the basis for the absolute superiority of his order's *wird* over all others. Aḥmad al-Tijānī stated emphatically that he had seen the Prophet Muḥammad in 'a waking state (*yaqḥẓatan*), and not in a dream'.³¹ He said he had been assured that he was among those who are saved; his request for special and exclusive privileges to his followers had been granted and guaranteed by the Prophet, and on the basis of this he addressed the following letter of warranty to all his followers:

'May the peace and blessing of God be upon you all. From the letter of the servant, the one needy in God, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Tijānī, to you all. After this, we beseech Almighty God to protect you with His care, to direct to you the flow (*yufīḍ*) of the oceans of His bounty and protection, to defend you from the sorrow of this world and the hereafter, and to save you from the poverty of the world and the torment of the hereafter. Be informed that the bounty of God has no limit, and bounty is indeed through the hand of God; He gives it to whomever He wishes. I declare to you that our status before God in the hereafter can never be approached by anyone among the saints, be he great or small. None among the saints from the time of the Companions to the end of the world can attain our status or draw near to it, for it lies beyond what all minds can attain, and because access to it is difficult even for great heroes. I did not declare this to you until I had heard it for certain from the Prophet, may the peace and blessing of God be upon him. And no one among men except for me alone can admit his entire following into Paradise without judgment (*ḥisāb*) or punishment (*'iqāb*), even if they have sinned and no matter what the extent of their disobedience. Beyond all this, the Prophet, may the peace and blessing of God be upon him, mentioned and guaranteed to me a certain thing concerning my followers which is not permitted for me to divulge; it cannot be seen or be known until in the hereafter. Yet despite all this, we do not jest about the sanctity of our masters, the saints, nor do we hold their glorification lightly. Therefore glorify the sanctity of the saints, both the living and the dead, for he who glorifies their sanctity will have his own sanctity glorified by God. Whoever despises them, God will humiliate him and be angry with him. Do not take the sanctity of the saints lightly. *Wa'l-salām!*'³²

Thus Aḥmad al-Tijānī set forth the basis of his sainthood as the *quṭb al-aqṭāb* and *khatm al-walāya al-muḥammadiyya*.³³ An important aspect of the sainthood of Aḥmad al-Tijānī is *fayḍ*, *fayḍa* or *fayadān*: superabundance of special divine favor which flows in an exclusive, direct, and private channel to the person of Aḥmad al-Tijānī. One such *fayḍa* is the *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ*, one recitation of which, he was assured by the Prophet, equals the spiritual reward of six

³¹ *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī* i, 91, and *passim*.

³² *Ibid.* ii, 151-52.

³³ Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya* 27-34.

thousand recitations of the entire Koran.³⁴ In fact, the reward for one recitation of *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* is more than the reward of all the devotion that has occurred in the universe.³⁵

Closely linked to *fayḍa* is the doctrine of the *ḥaḍra ilāhiyya* which is central to the works of ʿUmar Tall and Ibrāhīm Niass, the two most influential figures in the development of the Tijāniyya in Nigeria. For both figures, these two doctrines have cosmic significance.

In his *Rimāḥ ḥizb al-Raḥīm*,³⁶ ʿUmar Tall believes that Aḥmad al-Tijānī's status as *Khatm al-awliyāʾ*³⁷ confers on him a unique position in the spheres of cosmic existence, as represented in seven spiraling circles. The first circle is the outermost circle of the *ḥaqīqa aḥmadiyya*, the content of which no one knows except God, and the attainment of which has been restricted to the Prophet Muḥammad alone. The second is the circle of the *ḥaqīqa muḥammadiyya*, from which the *fayḍa* flows to the rest of creation. The third is the circle of *khatm al-walāya*, which receives the *fayḍa* from the second circle, and although this circle is essentially for prophets other than Muḥammad, Aḥmad al-Tijānī is located in this circle and receives a private *fayḍa* directly from the Prophet Muḥammad which is not available to the prophets in the circle. The fourth circle is that of the *awliyāʾ*³⁸ other than Aḥmad al-Tijānī, and though this circle is for the *awliyāʾ*, the followers of al-Tijānī share in it and receive an immense private *fayḍa* from him directly, by comparison to which the *fayḍa* of non-Tijānīs is like a drop of water in the ocean. The fifth circle is for the ordinary Tijānīs, while the sixth circle is for the followers of other *awliyāʾ*. The final and innermost circle is left unspecified without any indication of its occupants.³⁷

ʿUmar Tall emphasized the necessity for aTijānī to give total loyalty to one *shaykh* alone, for no amount of devotion could lead one to the *ḥaḍra ilāhiyya* without the permission of a *shaykh*. He also reiterated the doctrine of seeing the Prophet Muḥammad in a waking state rather than in a dream, stating that the Prophet is present in body and soul at any session of *dhikr*, and if God wills a

34 An important subtext here is the doctrinal status of the Koran as the only Islamic scripture whose recitation is counted as an act of devotion (*al-mutaʿabbad bi-tilāwatihī*). Thus the elevation of the rewards for reciting *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* over and above that of reciting the Koran also has the implication of making *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* superior to all other Islamic sacred texts. On *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ*, see also the contribution by Ousmane Kane in the present volume.

35 *Jawāhir al-maʿānī* i, 91 ff.

36 As published in the margins of *Jawāhir al-maʿānī*; see note 29.

37 *Ibid.* ii, 16-23.

servant to see the Prophet, He removes the veils from the servant's vision. It is in the belief that the Prophet will visit their *dhikr* sessions that the Tijānīs spread out a white piece of cloth for the Prophet to sit on in the center of the *dhikr* circle.

As for Ibrāhīm Niass, his contributions to Tijānī doctrines are to be found in his *Kāshif al-ilbās 'an fayḍat al-khatm Abī'l-ʿAbbās*, and *al-Sirr al-akbar*. Following a vision in 1930, Ibrāhīm Niass claimed to be the *ghawth al-zamān*, the highest status in the Sufi hierarchy of sainthood implying divine election as the Saviour of the Age.³⁸ He also claimed to have received both the *fayḍa*³⁹ and the 'Greatest Secret' of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, by virtue of which he received hidden knowledge without any effort or affiliation. Ibrāhīm Niass emphasized that it has been continuously transmitted from Aḥmad al-Tijānī that, in addition to guaranteed admission into Paradise, *fayḍa* would appear among the Tijānīs bringing tremendous material prosperity at a time when people have been hit by the hardest conditions. It should be remembered that part of the special privileges Aḥmad al-Tijānī claimed to have received for his followers during his live encounter with the Prophet was a 'thing' which Aḥmad al-Tijānī said he was not permitted to divulge. This indescribable 'thing' came to be designated among the Tijānīs as the Greatest Secret (*al-sirr al-akbar*). However, it is transmitted among the Tijānīs by a particular divinely elected follower of al-Tijānī, who by virtue of his election becomes the *khalīfa* of the shaykh, and possessor of the Greatest Secret. It has sometimes been suggested that the *khalīfa* is not the successor to Aḥmad al-Tijānī, but a deputy of God favored with private access to special, exclusive divine favor in the form of *fayḍa*.

To gain access to *fayḍa* and the 'Greatest Secret', the followers of Ibrāhīm Niass must undergo *tarbiya*, after which they take a vow of secrecy. According to the description Hiskett obtained from a Tijānī who had renounced his affiliation, *tarbiya* consists of a *muqaddam* leading the *murīd* through five stages of question and answer which are designated *ḥaḍras*. In the final *ḥaḍra* the belief is expounded that Ibrāhīm Niass is the present manifestation of *kawn dukka* (Hausa

38 M. Hiskett, 'The Community of Grace and its Opponents. The Rejectors: A Debate about Theology and Mysticism in Muslim West Africa with a Special Reference to its Hausa Expression', *Africa Language Studies* xvii/3 (1980) 102. Cf. the hagiography by the grandson of Niass, Hassan Cisse, *Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niass: Revivalist of the Sunna* (New York 1984).

39 Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad al-Tijānī, *Kāshif al-ilbās 'an fayḍat al-khatm Abī al-ʿAbbās* (Cairo 1971) 56-61.

derived from Arabic: 'The Whole of Being').⁴⁰ When Hiskett sought confirmation from his 'Tijānī friends', they insisted that Ibrāhīm Niass is not the present manifestation of *kawn dukka*, 'but that the Prophet Muḥammad, Aḥmad al-Tijānī and shaykh Ibrāhīm are all one, in that each is part of *kawn dukka*'.⁴¹

As for the doctrine of the *ḥaḍra al-ilāhiyya*, Ibrāhīm Niass' re-worked version has been explained as follows:

'There are five *ḥaḍarāt* (pl. of *ḥaḍra*) in the mystic cosmos, the lowest of which is *nāsūt*, the stage of material existence; then *malakūt*, the stage of divine light, which extends from the first to the seventh heaven of the cosmological architecture. It is also the world of incorporeal things and of the planets. Then comes the stage of *jabarūt*. This extends from the seventh heaven to the Throne of God. It is the stage of divine secrets and the world of the angels. After it is the stage of *lāhūt*, in which the names of God and His divine attributes become manifest. Finally, there is the summit, *hāhūt*, the stage of the divine essence'.⁴²

Although shaykh Niass' followers, known variously as *Jamā'at al-fayḍa* and Tijāniyya-Niassiyya, have grown to several million throughout West Africa,⁴³ they have been facing continuous opposition not only from the many Wahhābī-inspired movements all over West Africa, but also from fellow Tijānīs. When Ibrāhīm Niass turned up in Kano circa 1945, following his earlier contact in Mecca with the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Abdullahi Bayero, he was by no means universally accepted. In fact, he came at a time when a fierce controversy about funeral rites had split the ulama of Kano into two factions. One faction, known as Madabawa, was famous all over Northern Nigeria for its Islamic legal scholars. It was led by the *Sarkin Malamai*, the head of the ulama guild who was officially appointed by the Emir of Kano, and represented the establishment ulama from whose ranks the Islamic legal adviser to the Emir used to be appointed. The second faction was a break-away group from the Madabawa, and was known as Salgawa, after Mallam Muḥammadu Salga (1871-1938). The latter promoted a new orientation of Islamic scholarship in Kano characterized among other things by legal studies which extended beyond the *Mukhtaṣar* of al-Khalīl b. Iṣḥāq (d. 1374), regarded by the Madabawa as the highest canon.⁴⁴

40 Hiskett, *The Community* 120-21.

41 Ibid. 121.

42 Ibid. 118-9.

43 Ibid.

44 J.W. Chamberlin, *The Development of Islamic Education in Kano City, Nigeria, with Emphasis on Legal Education in the late 19th and 20th Centuries* (Ph.D. Diss., Columbia University 1975) 93-175. Cf. M. Nalado, *Kano State Jiya da Yau* (Zaria 1969) 26-34.

Initially the Madabawa were not impressed by shaykh Niass' claims even though they were Tijānīs, and they eventually rejected him when the Salgawa accepted him *en masse*. Before long, the earlier dispute over funeral rites between the Madabawa and Salgawa came to include the doctrines of shaykh Niass, and this brought about the emergence of the first polemical literature by Nigerian Tijānīs and their opponents.⁴⁵ This literature features prominently in the intellectual production of Nigerian Tijānīs, and was directed against the Qādiriyya up to the nineteen-sixties.

The first two decades of the twentieth century saw the introduction into Nigeria of branches of the Qādiriyya which were not connected with the legacy of °Uthmān b. Fūdī. According to Paden, involvement with the Qādiriyya during the nineteenth century had not been widespread, and 'very little Qādiriyya literature was written in Kano during that period'.⁴⁶ Paden also argues that with the weakening of Sokoto political authority over Kano as a result of British colonial influence, Kano ulama became affiliated with new branches of the Qādiriyya from North Africa. A Moroccan, Shaykh Bashīr, introduced the use of the *bandīr* to accompany collective recitation of the Qādiriyya *wird*, while Sa°d b. Aḥmad (c. 1860-1933) popularized a Qādiriyya *silsila* which did not go back to °Uthmān b. Fūdī. When Nāṣir Kabara became connected with this *silsila*, a new era for the Qādiriyya began in Nigeria. Until his death in 1996, Nāṣir remained the single most influential Qādirī shaykh in Nigeria and the whole of West Africa since the nineteen-thirties,⁴⁷ and the leading antagonist against the Tijāniyya up to the emergence of anti-Sufism in the nineteen-sixties. Nevertheless, he adopted many of the Tijānī campaign strategies for the massive popularization of the Qādiriyya including congregational observance of its *wird*, initiation tours, and establishing contacts with Qādirī centers in Baghdad, Beirut, Damascus, and Amman.⁴⁸

A specimen of Nāṣir Kabara's polemic against the 4ijāniyya is his *al-Nafakhāt al-nāṣiriyya* in which he gives considerable details about various aspects of the Qādiriyya. He also argues that despite their numerous branches, all Sufi orders aimed at one and the same thing even though they differ in approach. However, the Qādiriyya

45 For a survey of writings by Tijānī authors, see Hunwick, op. cit., 260-316.

46 Paden, *Religion* 68.

47 Paden, *Religion* 157-52.

48 Ibid.

takes Sufi initiates nearer to God in the shortest possible time, and is therefore superior to all the others. The *walāya* of °Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī was proclaimed as the source of *al-fuyūdāt al-rabbāniyya* for all the other *awliyā'* from his day to the end of the world.⁴⁹ Al-Jilānī was reported to have said that God had given him and his followers half the world, and felicity in the hereafter.⁵⁰

Among the countless *karāmāt* of al-Jilānī are his ability to intervene in human affairs even after his death. He never sinned, and it is not permissible to renounce affiliation to the Qādiriyya. The latter would entail disrespect for the *walāya* of al-Jilānī, which amounts to disrespect for the Prophet, which in turn is *ḥarām* according to the Koran and *ḥadīth*, and according to *ijmā'*.⁵¹

Other polemical works of Nāṣir Kabara⁵² include a number of treatises defending the use of *bandīr* to supply music in the *dhikr* sessions of the Qādiriyya, which had been attacked. In his *Qam' al-fasād fī tafḍīl al-saḍl 'alā'l-qabḍ fī ḥādhihī al-bilād*, Nāṣir Kabara argues against crossing the arms over the chest while standing in *ṣalāt* (*al-qabḍ*). This practice was popularized in Kano by Ibrāhīm Niass, and was regarded as the characteristic ritual feature of his followers. Tijānī responses were many, including a tract by Ibrāhīm Niass himself, entitled *Raf' al-malām 'an man rafa'a wa-qabaḍa iqtidā'an bi-sayyid al-anām*. Almost all the leading Tijānīs wrote rejoinders to *Qam' al-fasād*. Not only because it attacked the distinguishing ritual feature of the followers of Niass, but also, and perhaps more importantly, because the issue touched on the ritual validity of the five daily *ṣalāt*, the second of the five pillars of Islam, and the most important Islamic ritual.

While the *qabḍ-saḍl* controversy was fiercely raging between the Tijānīs and Qādirīs, one of the major opponents of Sufism, Abubakar Gumi became the Grand Kadi of Northern Nigeria in 1962. Consequently, his anti-Sufi views became decidedly more threatening to both the Tijānīs and Qādirīs. In the face of Gumi's challenge to the doctrinal basis of Sufism, it was imperative for Tijānīs and Qādirīs to reconcile their differences.

⁴⁹ Muḥammad al-Nāṣir al-Kabarī, *al-Nafakhāt al-nāṣiriyya fī al-ṭariqa al-Qādiriyya* (Zaria 1957) 15.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 13.

⁵¹ Ibid. 20-21.

⁵² For more on the intellectual productions of Nasiru Kabara, see: R. Loimeier, 'The writings of Nasiru Kabara', *Sudanic Africa: A Journal of Historical Sources* ii (1991) 165-74.

I have argued elsewhere that despite noted criticism of veneration of Sufi shaykhs and visitation of their tombs, there is no evidence to support the widespread supposition of Wahhābī influence on the leaders of the Sokoto *jihād*.⁵³ Hugh Clapperton reported that at Katagum on the borders of Borno and the Sokoto caliphate he met ‘a Felatah, who had been to Baghdad, Constantinople, Jerusalem and... told me he had seen the Wahabees at Mecca’; yet Clapperton said the Felatah ‘belonged to the order of the Dervishes’.⁵⁴ This ‘Felatah’ was neither the first nor the last to have travelled to Mecca and returned to Hausaland in the nineteenth as well as the first half of the twentieth century. Yet, none of them is on record as having brought back Wahhābī forms of anti-Sufism. Similarly, a study of Islamic movements in Nigeria by British colonial authorities conducted in 1952 mentions that there was no Wahhābī influence in Nigeria at the time.⁵⁵

One of the first Nigerian authors to write against the doctrinal foundations of Sufism was Abubakar Mahmud Gumi, who had been a Qādirī but renounced his affiliation around 1950. Earlier in the nineteen-forties, Sa’ad Zungur (1915-1958) had been preaching reform in Northern Nigeria. In his Hausa poem, *Waiar Bidi’a*, he condemned many practices he regarded as *bid’a* including taking an oath in the name of ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī, Aḥmad al-Tijānī or ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī.⁵⁶ Though the *Waiar Bidi’a* is by no means a critique against Sufism, it has been described as representing a break with the earlier tradition of Islamic poetry in Nigeria, because it is the first among modern Hausa poems to call for ‘the kind of Islam practised at the time of the Prophet, which was simple, clear, and free from superstitions and other accretions’.⁵⁷ This critique against *bid’a* in the sense of ‘superstition and accretions’ began in the nineteen-forties. By the nineteen-seventies, the range of *bid’a* was ex-

⁵³ Umar, *Sufism and Anti-Sufism* 163 ff.

⁵⁴ Hugh Clapperton, *Journal of an Excursion from Kouka in Bornou, through the Soudan, to Saccatoo, the Capital of Bello, Sultan of the Felatahs*, published as part of F.R.S. Denham’s *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in the Years 1822, 1823, and 1824* (London 1985, reprint of the 1826 edition) ii, 231.

⁵⁵ National Archives, Kaduna, Zaria Province: C 68, Report by M. Mangin, Head of the Department of Muslim Affairs, on his visit to Nigeria in March 1952, 2.

⁵⁶ Dandatti Abdulkadir, *The Poetry, Life and Opinions of Sa’ad Zungur* (Zaria 1974) 26-27.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 43.

panded to include Sufism.

This development was initiated by Abubakar Gumi, whose opposition to Sufism can be traced to the early nineteen-fourties when he arrived in Kano to study at the Kano Law School. This institution, where all the leading anti-Sufis studied at one time or another, has played a very prominent role in the evolution and development of anti-Sufism in Nigeria, since it was established by the British colonial authorities in 1934. Originally, its mission had been to train qadis. In 1947 it was reorganized to train teachers as well, and having been renamed School for Arabic Studies (SAS), it became the training ground for a new generation of ulama in Northern Nigeria. The School was notably different from the established pedagogical traditions of Islamic teaching and learning in the Central Sudan. As the first Nizāmiyya, it introduced a broad spectrum of Islamic scholarship: it offered courses on virtually all branches of Islamic learning, and on Arabic language and literature. The School was also characterized by relatively non-authoritarian teacher-student relations. Graduates of the SAS had the opportunity not only to join the modern bureaucracy introduced by the British, but likewise to pursue advanced studies to the doctorate level in British and other universities. Later, many other Islamic schools modeled after the SAS contributed to the emergence of a class of modern and somewhat westernized Muslim elite recognizably different in their *Weltanschauung* from the ulama trained in the older traditions of Islamic learning.⁵⁸ In particular, wholesale opposition to Sufism rather than mere criticisms of perceived Sufi 'excesses' has emerged almost exclusively from the new Muslim elites trained at the SAS, a point not lost on the traditional ulama as will be described below. Meanwhile, let me illustrate the evolution of anti-Sufism through the career of Abubakar Gumi, a prototype of the new Muslim elites educated at the SAS.

Abubakar Gumi was a graduate of the SAS and later received advanced teachers' training at Bukhat al-Riḍā in the Sudan. While still a student at the Law School, Gumi offered private lessons to a small number of disciples, some of whom wanted to explore Tijānī classics such as *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī* and *al-Yāqūta al-farīda*. As he became acquainted with Tijānī doctrines, Gumi is said to have become convinced that the Tijāniyya stood outside the fold of Islam, and thus he

⁵⁸ S.A.S. Galadanci, *Ḥarakat al-lughā al-ʿarabiyya wa-ādābiḥā fi Nigēria* (Cairo 1982) 90-119.

began his crusade against Sufism which was to last until his death in 1992.⁵⁹

Gumi's opposition to Sufism was reinforced when he began to represent the Premier of Northern Nigeria and the Sardauna of Sokoto, Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello, in the Muslim World League in Saudi Arabia, from the late nineteen-fifties. His doctrinal orientation became pronouncedly Wahhābī over time. This development, in a certain sense, reached its culmination when he received the King Faisal Award for Services to Islam.⁶⁰

The principal vehicles for the popularization of Gumi's anti-Sufism were the media: the Hausa newspaper *Gaskiya ta fi Kwabo*, Radio Nigeria in Kaduna, and the Kaduna Television Station. Elsewhere, I have documented the complex issues involved in Gumi's popularization of anti-Sufism through these media. Nigerian Sufis had to resort to the same media in order to counteract the unprecedented and negative consequences of Gumi's preaching against Sufism.⁶¹ Closely related is the use of audio cassettes, portable tape-recorders, and video cassettes recorded with hand-held video cameras, all of which in the nineteen-nineties, have become important media indeed for the popularization of Sufi and anti-Sufi ideas. Their quantity reflects the booming business of video and audio cassettes with Islamic sermons of every kind in Nigeria.⁶²

Gumi's most articulate critique against Sufism is his *al-ʿAqīda al-ṣaḥīḥa bi-muwāfaqat al-sharīʿa*, which is the first major attack on Sufism by a Nigerian author, published in 1972.⁶³ In this text Gumi argues thus:

'Islam is the way of life which God has prescribed for humans through the Prophet Muḥammad... Islam was specified in the Prophet's life time and later transmitted to us. Who-

⁵⁹ For details, see Gumi's autobiography as dictated to A. Tsiga, *Abubakar Gumi: Where I Stand* (Ibadan 1992).

⁶⁰ Ibid. 193-215.

⁶¹ See my 'Changing Islamic Identity in Nigeria from the 1960s to the 1980s: From Sufism to anti-Sufism', in L. Brenner (ed.), *Muslim Identity and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa* (London 1993) 156 ff.

⁶² During field research in 1993-94, I visited many shops in major cities and towns which sell recorded audio and video cassettes of Islamic preaching on various topics, and in Kano I purchased a number of audio cassettes recording the ongoing polemics between the Sufis and their opponents.

⁶³ However, Abū Bakr ʿAtīq in his *Hādḥā'l-Jawāb al-khālīs ʿalā wathīqat al-Ḥājj Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Karīm* responds to what al-Ḥājj Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Karīm wrote attacking the Tijaniyya-Niassiyya practice of *tarbiya*. ʿAtīq's tract was published in 1388/1968 and thus al-Ḥājj Aḥmad's text predates Gumi's critique.

ever follows its guidance in all things, be it in worship or in social interactions, is a Muslim who takes God as his god and his protector. Whoever does anything contrary to that has for his god and protector someone other than God'.⁶⁴

Gumi rejected the Sufi conception of *walāya* in conjunction with the hierarchy of saintly ranks at the zenith of which is the *qutb/ghawth* as the center of cosmic existence, and argued that every God-fearing Muslim is a *walī*. He quoted extensively from the *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī* regarding the claims of Aḥmad al-Tijānī to have received a special *wird* and exclusive guarantees in a live encounter with the Prophet Muḥammad. These claims Gumi rejected emphatically, asserting that:

'Whoever alleges that the Prophet had concealed anything during his lifetime and then delivered to those who came after him, has certainly belittled the worth of the Prophet. And that is clear *kufṛ* according to the opinion of the entire Muslim community'.⁶⁵

Gumi regarded all the Sufi orders as forms of worship which differed from the worship brought by the Prophet Muḥammad. He therefore maintained that the Sufi orders should not be treated as part of Islam but as distinct religions on their own. As Gumi's views were widely popularized through the media, strong opposition to his ideas began to emerge and eventually crystallized into a reconciliation between the hitherto quarreling ulama of the Tijāniyya and the Qādiriyya. The spread of Gumi's anti-Sufism also resulted in the formation of movements which counteracted Gumi not only intellectually, but by whatever means was deemed necessary. These developments in turn led Gumi's followers in 1978 to form their own movement *Jamā'at izālat al-bid'a wa-iqāmat al-sunna*.⁶⁶

Apart from a number of anti-Sufism pamphlets that followed the publication of Gumi's *al-'Aqida al-ṣaḥīḥa*, the most ambitious attack on Sufism was the publication of Dahiru Maigari's *al-Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niyās al-Singhālī* in 1981.⁶⁷ More than half of the 523 pages

64 Abubakar M. Gumi, *al-'Aqida al-ṣaḥīḥa bi-muwāfaqat al-sharī'a* (Beirut 1972) 75-6.

65 Ibid. 23; see also 35.

66 Umar, *Sufism* 183 ff. For the literature on the *Jamā'at izālat al-bid'a*, see Roman Loimeier, *Islamische Erneuerung und politische Wandel in Nordnigeria* (Hamburg 1993) 277-294.

67 Maigari's book was partially based on fieldwork conducted intermittently from 1973 to 1979. He submitted his findings under the title *al-Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niyās wa'l-tarīqa al-Tijāniyya fī al-qarn al-'ishrīn* to Bayero University, Kano, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Art in Islamic Studies. The Islamic University of Medina, Saudi Arabia, sponsored the publication of the thesis under the title: *al-Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niyās al-Singhālī, Ḥayātuhu, āyātuhu wa-ārā'uḥu wa-ta'ālīmuḥu: Kāshif al-ilbās wa-taḥqīq al-Sirr al-akbar, Dirāsa wa-ta'liq* (Beirut 1981).

of this book were dedicated to tracing the advent and development of the Tijāniyya-Niassiyya in Nigeria. Maigari concluded his work with a critical study of the Sufi ideas of Ibrāhīm Niass as contained in his *Kāshif al-ilbās* and *al-Sirr al-akbar*.

After outlining the *wird* of the Tijāniyya, Maigari observes that there is nothing Islamically objectionable about it except the Tijānī doctrines underpinning the *wird*, especially the enormous rewards it promises. He cites as an example Aḥmad al-Tijānī's letter of warranty to his followers, and then concludes that Sufi orders are nothing more than secret cults aimed at taking advantage of the credulity of ordinary Muslims. He further argues that since the Prophet Muḥammad did not pass away until he had most thoroughly explained every minute aspect of Islam, there is no need for a Muslim to follow any particular type of Sufi order.⁶⁸

Maigari attempts to trace the genealogy of the Sufi ideas of the Tijāniyya first by the textual strategy of quoting extended passages from works of Ibn al-ʿArabī, and then comparing these with similar, often exactly identical passages in the *Jawāhir al-maʿānī*, *Rimāḥ*, *Kāshif al-ilbās*, *al-Sirr al-akbar*, and the poems of Ibrāhīm Niass.⁶⁹ By tracing Tijānī doctrines to the ideas of Ibn al-ʿArabī, and by denouncing plagiarism in *Jawāhir al-maʿānī*, Maigari positioned his work in mainstream criticism against the Tijāniyya.⁷⁰ But he goes beyond Ibn al-ʿArabī to trace the genealogy of Tijānī doctrines to the Ismāʿīlī doctrines of the Fāṭimids, Neoplatonism, and the Upanishads. He argues that Ismāʿīlī doctrines remained underground in North Africa long after the Fāṭimids, and then first reappeared in Abū'l-Ṭayyib al-Qādirī's *al-Maqṣad al-aḥmad*, on which ʿAlī Ḥarāzīm made some alterations retitling it *Jawāhir al-maʿānī*.⁷¹ By emphasizing that there are pantheistic elements in Tijānī doctrines taken from Neoplatonism and the Upanishads, Maigari was laboring to make the point that the Tijāniyya originated from sources outside Islam.

As was to be expected, Tijānīs' responses to Maigari were bitterly critical, and one Tijānī author charged that Maigari had sold his religion for the Master of Arts he had been awarded.⁷² In a second

68 Ibid. 31-34.

69 Ibid. 348-408, and 363-498.

70 Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya* 27-57.

71 Maigari, *al-Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niyās* 496.

72 Al-Ḥājī ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAlawī, *Indhār wa-ifāda ilā bāʿi ʿdīnihi bi'l-shahāda*. Cf. Muḥammad Ibn al-Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh al-Mūrītānī, *al-Radd bi'l-ḥadīth wa'l-qurʾān ʿalā mā fi*

book entitled *al-Tuhfa al-saniyya*, Maigari responded to these critical rejoinders with the most scathing criticism against Sufism yet by a Nigerian author. He explains in the preface to the *Tuhfa* that he had himself been a staunch Tijānī who obtained *al-idhn al-muṭlaq* and reached the high rank of *khalīfa* of Aḥmad al-Tijānī. It was in that capacity that he introduced many initiates to the secret doctrines of the Tijāniyya. But having studied these doctrines very carefully, he became convinced that they were completely un-Islamic. And so he writes:

'It was for this reason that I determined to write still more to alert my sincere Muslim brothers to the dangers which the Tijāniyya poses to the Islamic faith and the sharia, so that they might fight the Tijāniyya with all the force they can muster until they drive it out of their midst. And the present book which I offer the reader is a continuation of this ongoing *jihād*... until Muslims are freed from enslavement, and spiritual and material exploitation by the shaykhs of Sufi orders'.⁷³

Within the 222 pages of the *Tuhfa*, Maigari sought to expose the 'secret doctrines' of the Tijāniyya. He completely rejected as un-Islamic the Tijānī belief that *al-Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* and *Jawharat al-kamāl* offered greater rewards than reciting the Koran, arguing that the Tijānī doctrine of *quṭbāniyya* effectively presents the *quṭb* as being the co-equal of God in 'running the entire cosmos'.⁷⁴ Pursuing this line of argumentation, Maigari reaffirmed his earlier conclusion, and that of many who had gone before him: Sufism is a religion different and quite apart from Islam.⁷⁵

Another line of attack was introduced when the *Izāla* sponsored the publication of a pamphlet written by Aḥmad Ibrāhīm and Abubakar Jibril, two lecturers at the Department of Islamic Studies of Bayero University, and Aminuddin Abubakar, leader of the Islamic *Da'wa* in Kano. The title of the pamphlet, *Ḥasm al-tardīd fī 'ilm al-tawḥīd*, does not suggest any opposition to Sufism, but the conception of *tawḥīd* propounded within the fifty-page pamphlet is meant to prove that Sufism is incompatible with Islamic monotheism.

Ḥasm al-tardīd opens with a close analysis of the *kalimat al-shahāda*, followed by the identification of the doctrinal and devotional implications of believing the proposition that there is no god

kitāb Maigari al-Nigerī min al-zawr wa'l-buhtān (Kano 1989).

⁷³ Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Maigari al-Barnāwī, *al-Tuhfa al-saniyya bi-tawḍīḥ al-ṭarīqa al-Tijāniyya* (n.p., n.d.) 7-8.

⁷⁴ Ibid. 137.

⁷⁵ Ibid. *passim*.

but God.⁷⁶ Following Ibn Taymiyya, the authors divide *tawhīd* into three types: *tawhīd al-rubūbiyya*, *tawhīd al-ulūhiyya* and *tawhīd al-asmā' wa'l-ṣifāt*. *Tawhīd al-rubūbiyya* is defined as believing in the existence of God, His lordship over everything and His disposition over creation, and is not a doctrine unique to Islam. *Tawhīd al-ulūhiyya* entails the necessity of dedicating all worship to God alone, and it was for the establishment of this kind of *tawhīd* that God sent all the prophets. *Tawhīd al-asmā' wa'l-ṣifāt* is characterized as belief in all the attributes of God mentioned in the Koran and the *aḥādīth ṣaḥīha*, without asking how (*bilā kayf*).⁷⁷

So far, none of the above would seem to have anything to do with Sufism. However, the subtext here is that certain aspects of Sufism are incompatible with *tawhīd al-ulūhiyya* which is presented as the distinguishing feature of Islam. This point becomes clear from what the authors term *nawāqid al-Islām*, the negators of Islam.⁷⁸ An example of a negator of Islam is someone who places intermediaries between God and His servants, and depends on such intermediaries for intercession: this is a reference to Sufi shaykhs. Another negator of Islam is someone who believes that anyone could offer guidance better than the guidance of the Prophet Muḥammad, i.e. Tijānī belief that one recitation of *al-Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* brings greater reward than the recitation of the Koran.

The preceding brief survey of the polemical literature against Sufism allows one to identify three separate lines of attack: Sufism as *bid'ā*; Sufism as incompatible with the sharia; and Sufism as a contradiction to *tawhīd*. Rejection based on these three categories of objections focuses specifically on the Qādiriyya and the Tijāniyya.

As already noted, prior to the publication of Gumi's *al-ʿAqīda al-ṣaḥīha*, Sufi polemical literature revolved around the rival claims to superiority of Qādirīs and Tijānīs, and the ritual validity of *qabḍ* or *sadl*. However, once Gumi's anti-Sufi views began to be aired on Radio Nigeria Kaduna in the late nineteen-sixties,⁷⁹ it was not long before Sufi responses appeared in print especially from leading Tijānīs in Kano. And after Gumi's *al-ʿAqīda al-ṣaḥīha* was published in 1972, several rejoinders appeared. I have already mentioned

76 A. Ibrahim, A. Jibril and A. Abubakar, *Ḥasm al-tardīd fī ʿilm al-tawhīd* (Jos 1986) 6-12.

77 Ibid. 12-16.

78 Ibid. 32-33.

79 Umar, *Sufism* 165-67.

above that Maigari wrote his *al-Tuḥfa al-saniyya* as a rejoinder to the criticisms of his first book, *Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Niyās*.

The formation of the *Jamāʿat izālat al-bidʿa* in 1978 intensified the confrontation between the Sufis and their opponents. Apart from the popularization of the anti-Sufi ideas of Gumi through public preaching, the *Izāla* introduced the *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb as a textbook in its schools; it has also been active in distributing works of Ibn Taymiyya obtained from Saudi Arabia.

The rise of anti-Sufism resulted in the production of numerous tracts by Nigerian Sufi authors responding to their critics.⁸⁰ Some of these responses are primarily concerned with the contention that Sufism is a religion in its own right, quite separate from Islam. Other tracts respond with a partial revision of aspects of Sufism which had come under fire from the anti-Sufis, while still maintaining firm belief in the Islamic validity of Sufism. This is the line of argument pursued by Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ whose initial argument for the emendation of *Jawāhir al-maʿānī* regarding the rewards of reciting *Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ*⁸¹ was not well received by many Tijānīs.⁸² It was partly in response to the criticisms by fellow Tijānīs that he elaborated his arguments more forcefully in a second book, while at the same time reaffirming his Tijānī convictions.⁸³

By far the most prevalent response to anti-Sufism has consisted in presenting profuse quotations from Sufi classics which emphasize the Islamic credentials of the leading Sufis, while casting aspersions on the learning of the anti-Sufis as well as on their Islamic faith. The rise of anti-Sufism also brought about the demise of the bitter quarrels between the Tijāniyya and the Qādiriyya by the nineteen-eighties. The dominant position which became established is that all the Sufi orders are essentially the same.

The identification of Sufism with *iḥsān* was reiterated by scholars such as Muḥammad Sani Kafanga. He summarized the various articulations of the argument that Sufism is to be identified with *iḥsān* enunciated by various Islamic scholars including ʿUthmān b. Fūdī,⁸⁴

⁸⁰ For a preliminary list see the Appendix to the present article.

⁸¹ Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ b. Yūnus b. Muḥammad al-Awwal al-Ḥusaynī, *al-Takfīr akḥṭar bidʿa tuḥaddid al-salām waʾl-waḥda bayn al-muslimīn fī Nigeria* (Cairo 1983) 87 ff.

⁸² Awwal Anwar, *Tasirin Siyasa a Addini* (Zaria 1992) 41–45.

⁸³ Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ b. Yūnus b. Muḥammad al-Awwal, *al-Mughīr ʿalā shubuhāt ahl al-ahwāʾ wa-akādhīb al-munkir ʿalā kitāb al-Takfīr*, (Beirut 1986) 41 ff.

⁸⁴ Muḥammad Sani Kafanga, *al-Mawāhib al-kanawīyya fī dhikr shayʾ yataʿallaq biʾl-*

and then concluded that anti-Sufis have wrongly applied to Sufis Koranic verses meant for unbelievers and polytheists.

Related to the position that Sufism is equal to *ihsān* is the effort to highlight the devotional aspects of Sufism rather than the esoteric doctrines that had been assailed by the anti-Sufis. This is a prominent feature in most of the Sufi responses, and it is often articulated in a rhetorical mode to ridicule the critique that Sufi orders are not part of Islam but separate religions of their own. Ibrāhīm Niass' use of this rhetorical mode in his responses to the repeated question of whether he had renounced his affiliation to the Tijāniyya⁸⁵ was very effective. Even an implacable opponent such as Maigari had to deal with what he regarded as the seeming transition by Niass towards the end of his life from *Shaykh al-ṭarīqa al-Tijāniyya* to *Shaykh al-islām*.⁸⁶

In his *Tanbīh al-suʿadāʾ*⁸⁷ Muḥammad al-ʿĀshir Shuʿayb cautioned his fellow Tijānis, and all Sufis generally, against becoming susceptible to the rationalist arguments of the anti-Sufis, arguing that belief in Sufism is not grounded on formal rationalism but 'on the light of faith which God, if He pleases, placed in his servants to illuminate their hearts to accept what they hear of the Truth'.⁸⁸ He then proceeded to demonstrate that once such a divine light illuminates the heart of the believer, there will be no problem at all regarding the credibility of Tijānī doctrines. These included the claim that Aḥmad al-Tijānī received *al-Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* direct from the Prophet Muḥammad when the two met 'in a waking state, and not in a dream or vision', as well as the belief that the spiritual reward for reciting *al-Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ* is greater than that of reciting the Koran. According to Shuʿayb:

'To say that the Prophet, peace be upon him, could be seen in a waking state and be spoken with directly will not be denied by someone whose insight God has illuminated with the light of faith that leads to belief. Someone with illuminated insight will not deny beholding the Prophet alive because of what he has acquired of the Muḥammadan Light (*al-anwār al-*

ḥadīth al-thānī min al-arbaʿīn al-Nawawīyya (Kano 1974) 7.

⁸⁵ See for example Ibrāhīm Niyās al-Kawlakhī, *al-Bayān wa'l-tibyān ʿan al-Tijāniyya wa'l-Tijāniyyīn* (Kano n.d.); and Hādḥā Jawāb li-mawlānā shaykh al-islām al-Shaykh al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥājj ʿAbdallāh al-Tijānī al-Kawlakhī raḍiya Allāh ʿanhu ajāba bihi baʿḍ al-muntamin ilā al-ʿilm allatī arsalahā yaṭlub al-bayān ʿan qaḍīyya ḥadathat min arājiḥ al-murjaʿīn wa-akādhīb al-kādhībīn al-mubṭilīn al-bāṭilīn min al-munkirīn (Kano 1975).

⁸⁶ Maigari, *al-Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niyās* 155-98.

⁸⁷ Muḥammad al-ʿĀshir Shuʿayb, *Tanbīh al-suʿadāʾ ʿalā ʿamal al-wahhābiyyīn alladhīn yukhrijūn al-muslimīn min ṭuruq al-awliyāʾ* (Beirut 1979).

⁸⁸ Ibid. 5.

muḥammadiyya)... and will not rule to imprison the Prophet in His grave when in fact the totality of the Prophet is light'.⁸⁹

An interesting point to note here is the rejection of rationalist argumentation which had in the main informed most of the polemical literature of Sufism and anti-Sufism. I made this point earlier when I called attention to the Sufi intellectual output in the *fiqh* mode of Islamic discourse, because that mode is more amenable to argument and counter-argument than the evocative mode of conventional Sufi discourse. The redeployment of this Sufi mode by Muhammad al-[°]Āshir Shu[°]ayb reflects a change in polemical tactics by the Sufis, a theme I will return to in the conclusion of this article.

Another interesting line of argumentation in the Sufi responses to anti-Sufism is developed around the motif of trials, tribulations and the triumph of prophetic and saintly figures. In advancing this line of argument, Muḥammad Ainūma chose Aḥmad al-Tijānī as a saintly figure renowned as a model for reviving the *sunna* and annihilating *bid[°]a*,⁹⁰ thus alluding to, and rejecting the criticism of, Sufism as *bid[°]a*. At the same time he is also subverting the self-conception of the opponents of Sufism as being revivers of the *sunna* of the Prophet. By characterizing Aḥmad al-Tijānī as 'the model for reviving the *sunna*', Muḥammad Ainūma reappropriates this important basis of self-legitimization from the opponents of Sufism.

This author then embarks on an elaborate demonstration of how the saintly virtues of Aḥmad al-Tijānī made him the model reviver of the *sunna*. He frequently quotes from the Koran and compares the quoted verses with the reported utterances of Aḥmad al-Tijānī. These favourable comparisons are held to constitute the basis for believing al-Tijānī's claim to have met the Prophet Muḥammad alive despite the criticisms of the anti-Sufis.⁹¹ Ainūma argues that 'the rejection of al-Tijānī and other *awliyā'*' is a tradition inherited from the prophets and apostles',⁹² he then proceeds with extensive quotations from the Koran to illustrate the recurrent trials, tribulations and the triumph of, first, the prophets and apostles from Adam to Muḥammad, and then such leading Sufis as al-Junayd al-Baghdādī, Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī, Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī and many others who were 'rejected out of jealousy, hatred, and transgression'. Ainūma makes his point

⁸⁹ Ibid. 10.

⁹⁰ Muḥammad Ainūma b. Muḥammad Aisami, *Is[°]āf al-muḥibb al-fānī bi-ta[°]rīf al-Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī* (n.p. 1983) 2.

⁹¹ Ibid. 3-7.

⁹² Ibid. 9.

as follows:

'From this you know that the *awliyā*⁹³ are not free from being rejected, hurt, insulted, beaten, cursed and otherwise harmed in various ways. Yet they continue to exist without being restricted by time or space and without bothering with the utterances of their rejectors'.⁹³

An interesting omission in the long lists of Sufis who suffered trials and tribulations and then eventually triumphed is al-Ḥusayn b. Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj (d. 922). But perhaps the omission is necessary here since the point Ainūma appears to be emphasizing is the *triumph* over trials and tribulations, in which case the martyrdom of al-Ḥallāj is not relevant — though it would have been, had the point been to celebrate martyrdom. Instead, Ainūma concluded his treatise with a joyful poem of self-congratulation for the bounties of the *fayḍa Tijāniyya*.⁹⁴ Trial, tribulation, and ultimate triumph can be regarded as a necessary prelude, enabling the Tijānis to deal more effectively with the threats against the abundant material and spiritual rewards guaranteed by Aḥmad al-Tijānī to his followers.

Finally, it should be noted that Sufis addressed the socio-political base of the opponents of Sufism. As was mentioned above, opposition to Sufism in Nigeria has come almost exclusively from the new class of Muslim intellectuals trained at the SAS. This point was not lost on the traditional ulama who have been the main proponents of Sufism. It is most clearly addressed in a work by ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad Bello in which he identifies his adversaries to be: 'Brothers of Satan who read the Koran on the street, gathering with them... women and ignorant men and cursing followers of the sunna and praising followers of *bidʿa*'.⁹⁵ This group of people are the Wahhābī followers of Gumi, who are presented as the products of the schools established by the British colonial authorities following their conquest of Nigeria. He goes on to link the British intention to impose their laws all over Nigeria with the establishment of the so-called 'Islamiyya Schools' (i.e. SAS and others on its model) where Muslim students are taught a mixture of British and Islamic law. Students are also taught that Islamic law is outdated and should be replaced with British law, and those who excel in adopting this view are, upon graduation, appointed to high positions in government in order to put what they have been taught into practice. The wealth and

⁹³ Ibid. 10-14.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 19-20.

⁹⁵ ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad Bello, *al-ʿAṣā ʿalā raʾs man ṭaghā wa ʿaṣā* (Maiduguri n.d.) 1.

prestige of high position attracts more and more Muslims to send their children to the 'Islamiyya Schools'. It is in this way that the British, whom 'Abd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad Bello refers to simply as Christians, have succeeded in producing 'a group of Nigerians who always work very hard to follow British/Christian laws'.⁹⁶ He further charges that the 'Islamiyya Schools and their products are double-faced, one face is Islamic and the other Christian'.⁹⁷ and this is why they always misinterpret the Koran, insult the *awliyā*, and reject the Sufi guidance of the latter.

'Abd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad Bello's view that the emergence of anti-Sufism in Nigeria is the result of a British/Christian policy is not likely to convince many people. However, the polemical effect of accusing Sufism's opponents of collusion in a British/Christian conspiracy against Islam should not be underestimated. The charge has enormous popular and emotive appeal to Muslim masses in Northern Nigeria, where a strong and widespread suspicion that the schools established by the British were meant to convert Muslims to Christianity existed throughout the British colonial period (1900-1960). To overcome this suspicion, British colonial authorities introduced Islamic Religious Knowledge in the school curricula, and in 1947 reorganized the School for Arabic Studies to train teachers of Islamic Religious Knowledge, in addition to training Islamic judges for which the school was originally established. Yet, Western education has remained suspect even after independence. Hence, any indictment of people trained in the schools established by the British can easily exploit this suspicion.

'Abd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad Bello's allusion to the wealth and prestige of high governmental position associated with the opponents of Sufism is also found in other publications on Sufism and anti-Sufism in Nigeria. The political, social and economic factors accounting for this state of affairs have been amply documented in many studies published over the last three decades.⁹⁸ The information presented in these studies has not been repeated here, but our purpose has been to offer supplementary perspectives based on highlighting the intellectual and doctrinal aspects.

Confrontation between Nigerian Sufis and their opponents is an on-

⁹⁶ Ibid. 8-11.

⁹⁷ Ibid. 10.

⁹⁸ See footnote 1.

going occurrence. For this reason only preliminary observations, and questions and reflections providing direction for further research, seem to be apposite. Our first observation concerns the various strategies of polemical discourse. The most fascinating of these has been the hermeneutical strategy employed by Nigerian Tijānīs: their simplification of doctrines from the Tijānī classics in exegetical literature, and later in their responses to anti-Sufis. Thus, in response to the attack which claims Sufism is a religion separate from Islam, the Nigerian Sufis emphasized the interpretation of Sufism as *ihsān*. The hermeneutical strategy allows considerable latitude in juggling contested intellectual and doctrinal positions. Yet, one wonders how effective it is in winning over ideological adversaries. Is it more persuasive when employed offensively, defensively, or as a rear-guard action? How do opponents react to the hermeneutical maneuver of employing classificatory schemes and assigning shifting significations to earlier articulations of the same idea? What are the roles of specialized hermeneutical vocabularies in polemical debates?

The criticisms against Sufism as *bid'ā*, as incompatible with *tawhīd*, as contrary to the sharia, and as a separate religion combine to draw attention to the different modes of Islamic discourse. The casting of the Tijānī *wird* in terms of *shurūṭ* and *fatāwā* is another indicator of employing a *fiqh* mode of discourse to integrate the binary of *ḥaqīqa* and sharia. Questions arising here include: how are Islamic forms of validation constructed, promoted, contested and privileged in the various modes of Islamic discourse? What are the conventions and protocols for the invention and management of a subject-area, proof and authority? What is the argumentational force of a mode of discourse and how is such a force activated, deployed, resisted, neutralized or deactivated?

A number of authors have highlighted the long-standing scholarly neglect of the importance of doctrinal matters in the crucial roles which Sufi orders have historically played in the economic, political, social and cultural transformations of Islamic communities in West Africa.⁹⁹ This neglect arises from the unwillingness — some would say hostility — of secular paradigms of thought to accept religious convictions as motivation or explanation for human behaviour.

⁹⁹ For example see: L. Brenner, *West African Sufi: The Religious Heritage and Spiritual Search of Cerno Bokar Saalif Taal* (London 1984); and John O. Hunwick et al. 'An Introduction to the Tijani Path: Being an Annotated Translation of the Chapter Headings of the *Kitāb al-Rimāh* of al-Ḥājj Umar', *Islam et Sociétés au sud du Sahara* vi (1992) 17-32.

However, secular paradigms have been subjected to interrogation concerning their failure to predict the forceful penetration not only of 'Islamisms', but of all types of religious and cultural 'fundamentalisms' into the ongoing political transformations around the world. Is a Kuhnian revolution needed in order to establish religion as an autonomous explanatory category alongside the privileged secular categories?¹⁰⁰

APPENDIX

The following list,¹⁰¹ which is very incomplete, enumerates responses to anti-Sufism by Nigerian authors:

1. Muḥammad Sani Kafanga (d. 1989)
 - i) *al-Dalā'il al-sāmiyya fī aṣl al-taṣawwuf wa-wujūb ittikhādh shaykh al-tarbiyya*
 - ii) *al-Minah al-ḥamīda fī radd 'alā fāsid al-'aqīda* (Beirut 1972, 67 pp.)
 - iii) *al-Adilla al-saniyya fī radd 'alā al-ṭā'ifa al-bid'iyya*
 - iv) *al-Mawāhib al-kanawiyya fī dhikr shay' yata'allaq bi'l-ḥadīth al-thānī min al-arba'in al-Nawawiyya* (Kano 1974)
2. Abubakar 'Atiq b. Khidīr b. Abī Bakr al-Kashināwī al-Tijānī (d. 1974)
 - v) *Tanbīh al-ikhwān bi-takdhīb ṣāhib al-khibāl al-ṭā'in li-jawharat al-kamāl fī al-ṣalāt 'alā sayyid al-rijāl* (1972, 29 pp.)
 - vi) *Tanbīh al-nubahā' li-'allā yaghtarrū bi-qawl al-sufahā'* (1971, 17 pp.)
 - vii) *Tahṣīl al-amānī*
 - viii) *Ifādat al-mu'taqidīn bi-adillat ṣiḥḥat mā 'alayhi al-dhākīrīn*
 - ix) *Hādthā al-Jawāb al-khāliṣ 'alā wathīqat al-Ḥājj Aḥmad 'Abd al-Karīm* (Kano 1968)
3. Muḥammad al-Nāṣir b. Muḥammad al-Mukhtār (Nasiru Kabara)
 - x) *al-Naṣiḥa al-ṣariḥa fī al-radd 'alā al-'aqīda al-ṣaḥiḥa* (Kano 1972)
 - xi) *al-Nafahāt al-nāṣiriyya*
- 4) Muḥammad al-'Āshir Shu'ayb

¹⁰⁰ Some of the materials in this paper were originally presented to Bayero University, Kano, as part of the requirements for an M.A. degree in Islamic Studies, and I am grateful to my teachers and academic advisers at Bayero, especially Professors S.A.S. Galadanci, Muhammad Sani Zahradeen and Mallam Shehu Umar, and also to the late Professor Abdullahi Muhammad of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. There are additional materials in this chapter which I collected in 1992-94 during field research in Nigeria supported by a grant from the Joint Committee on African Studies of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies with funds provided by the Rockefeller Foundation.

¹⁰¹ I would like to acknowledge gratefully the kind assistance of Professor John O. Hunwick, who allowed me to draw from his vast knowledge of the intellectual productions of the West African 'ulamā'. In conjunction with the list in this appendix, see also his *Arabic Literature of Africa* ii, 260-316.

- xii) *Tanbīh al-suʿadāʾ ʿalā ʿamal al-wahhābiyyīn alladhīn yukhrijūn al-muslimīn min ṭuruq al-awliyāʾ* (Beirut 1397/1979)
- 5) Abū Bakr Nūfawā b. Muḥammad (Malam Dudu Nufawa)
- xiii) *Tarīqat al-sunna fī al-radd ʿalā al-Izāla* (18 pp.)
- 6) Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad al-Zakzakī
- xiv) *al-Risālat al-ūlā* (1979, 10 pp)
- 7) Muḥammad al-Kabīr b. Muḥammad Sanī al-Kanawī al-Tijānī
- xv) *al-Sihām al-ṣāʾiba li-nuḥūr al-fiʾa al-ṭāghiya* (1966, 16 pp)
- xvi) *Muṭribat al-ikhwān tuḥzin kull munkir wa-shānīʿ* (1971, 16 pp)
- 8) Abū Bakr al-Miskīn
- xvii) *Qawl al-mushtāq fī taqrīz man ilā Allah yashtāq*
- 9) Muḥammad al-Bashīr b. Muḥammad al-Bakawī
- xviii) *Radd al-Jawāb liʾl-munkir ilā awliyāʾ Allah* (1970, 13 pp.)
- 10) ʿAbd al-Salām b. Ḥusayn b. Ḥamdūn al-Barnāwī al-Ghazarghāmī
- xix) *Dāmighat al-aʿdāʾ wa-man salla saʿf al-iʿtidāʾ* (1962, 12 pp.)
- 11) Muḥammad Ḥabīb b. ʿAbdallāh al-Kanawī
- xx) *Rawḍat al-suʿadāʾ fī ithbāt al-ʿaqida al-ṣaḥīḥa*
- 12) Ibrāhīm Ṣalīḥ b. Yūnus b. Muḥammad al-Awwal
- xxi) *al-Takfīr akḥṭar bidʿa tuḥaddid al-salām waʾl-waḥda bayn al-muslimīn fī Nigeria* (Cairo 1983, 194 pp.)
- xxii) *al-Mughīr ʿalā shubuhāt ahl al-ahwāʾ wa-akādhīb al-munkir ʿalā kitāb al-Takfīr* (Beirut 1986, 584 pp)
- 13) Ḥamza b. ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Bicawī
- xxiii) *Tanbīh al-sufahāʾ wa-masarrat al-ʿuqalāʾ fī adillat al-tawassul biʾl-anbiyāʾ waʾl-awliyāʾ wa-adillat al-maḥabba liʾl-ṣāliḥīn wa-bayān nifāq al-wahhābiyyīn waʾl-izāliyyīn* (1980, 16 pp)
- 14) Muḥammad Ainūma b. Muḥammad Aisami
- xxiv) *Isʿāf al-muḥibb al-fānī bi-taʿrīf al-Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī* (n.p. 1983)
- 15) ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad Bello
- xxv) *al-ʿAṣā ʿalā raʾs man ṭaghā wa-ʿaṣā* (Maiduguri n.d.).

A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF OPPOSITION TO SUFISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

JACOBUS A. NAUDÉ

Muslims of the Cape Peninsula are protected by seven Kramats encircling the region.¹ Tombs 'make up the Holy Circle which stretches from Robben Island to the *Kramat* of Shaykh Yusuf on the Macassar Downs ... starting at the old cemetery on the slopes of Signal Hill, just above the quarry in Strand Street, where two saintly men were buried many years ago, the circle continues to two graves on the top of Signal Hill ... hence it goes on to a grave, much revered, situated above Oude Kraal beyond Camps Bay, and sweeps round the mountain to a *Kramat* at Constantia, on the Tokai Road. From there [the circle continues to] ... the *Kramat* of Shaykh Yusuf of Faure, on the farm "Zandvliet". The circle is completed by an old tomb on Robben Island.'² These graves of holy leaders in the Sufi movement are places of regular pilgrimage, enabling the believers to be in direct spiritual contact with their guides in this life and the hereafter. Many Muslims consider the graves of these masters to be places of considerable *baraka*. Muslims visit these tombs in order to supplicate God and to benefit from the spiritual power contained in them.

Before they set out on the pilgrimage to Mecca, Muslims in the Cape go to the graves of the great masters of *taṣawwuf* (Sheikh Yusuf of Faure, and Tuans Nur al-Mubin and Abd al-Rahman al-Matebe Shah) to present their 'greetings', and to pray to God for a successful and acceptable pilgrimage.³ By way of maintaining another Sufi practice, there are presently about twenty groups in the

¹ This article is based almost exclusively on written material. Instead of employing an academic transliteration of Arabic proper names and terms, the customary local forms have been retained in many cases. Yet, for practical reasons to do with making the index, some names and terms have been transcribed in accordance with the standardised system adopted in the present volume.

² Yusuf da Costa and Achmat Davids, *Pages From Cape Muslim History* (Pietermaritzburg 1994) 133.

³ Da Costa in Da Costa and Davids, *op. cit.* 139.

Cape who observe the annual birthday celebration of the Prophet Muḥammad.

Though the first Muslim leaders have often been described in the history of Islam in South Africa, their role as Sufis has received little attention. Sufism is absent from the scholarly study of Islam in this country. One reason for this may be Hans Kähler's observation⁴ that various *dhikrs* are learnt in the Cape *ṭarīqas*, not in order to reach the highest stage of knowledge in the form of gnosis, but to acquire extraordinary magic powers. As he explains, Islamic mysticism among the Cape Muslims degenerated into a means of communicating with supernatural beings for the purpose of gaining wealth or establishing power over others. In his discussion of currents and movements in South African Islam C.J.A. Greyling only devotes a few sentences in passing to Sufism.⁵ G.J.A. Lubbe gives equally little attention to the subject in his discussion of the pioneers of Islam at the Cape.⁶ The essay on Sufi Ṣāḥib by G.R. Smith⁷ is elaborated upon in the M.A. thesis of Yunus Saib.⁸ Only recently has Sufism in the Cape received more extensive attention in a work by Yusuf Da Costa and Achmat Davids.⁹

Greyling¹⁰ noted that 'Coloured' Muslims rarely belong to a Sufi order. There are some who practise certain spiritual devotions, such as reciting a *wird* (a fixed prayer at the *kramats* — usually on Thursday evenings). Otherwise he encountered little evidence of Sufism in the Cape. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the Islam which arrived in South Africa with the first Muslims was characterised to some extent by Sufism.

Sufi orders had long been established in the places of origin of the

4 Hans Kähler, 'Die Kultur der Kapmalaien in der Republik Südafrika', in H.L. Gottschalk, B. Spuler, & H. Kähler, *Die Kultur des Islams* (Frankfurt am Main 1971) 439-460; 456.

5 C.J.A. Greyling, *Die invloed van strominge in die Islam op die Jesusbeskouing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Muslims* (Unpublished dissertation, University of Stellenbosch 1976) 24-65, distinguishes between four streams: i) the Older Orthodoxy; ii) Modernism; iii) the Ahmadiyya; and iv) the Modern Orthodoxy.

6 G.J.A. Lubbe, *The Muslim Judicial Council – A descriptive and analytical investigation* (Ph.D. Diss., University of South Africa, Pretoria 1989) 47-49.

7 G.R. Smith, 'A Muslim Saint in South Africa', *African Studies*, xxviii/4 (1969).

8 Yunus Saib, *Ṣāḥib's [1850-1911] Contribution to the Early History of Islam in South Africa* (M.A. thesis, University of Durban-Westville 1993).

9 See note 2 above.

10 Greyling, op. cit. 30.

first Cape Muslims.¹¹ Indeed, prominent Sufi leaders were exiled to the Cape. On 2 April 1694 Sheikh Yusuf al-Taj al-Khalwati al-Maqasari (d. 1699) arrived on board *de Voetboog*. He was banned to the Cape from the Bantam region in Java for his role in the rebellion against Dutch domination of his country. Yusuf had been initiated into the Khalwatiyya Sufi order during his studies in Mecca.¹² When he reached the highest position in the order he became known as the 'crown', or paramount spiritual guide, of the Macassar branch of the Khalwatiyya order. As a Sheikh, or *murshid*, of a Sufi order he performed at the Cape the religious rites and ceremonies associated with his order.¹³ Khalwatiyya communal religious ceremonies after a funeral are common practice in the Western Cape.¹⁴ Communal practices such as *rātib al-ḥaddād* and the *mawlid al-nabī* are part of the Sufi tradition which came to the Cape between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries as part of the spread of Islam to this country.¹⁵

Islam at the Cape shows the influence of Hinduism in such activities as *rampie-sny* (the cutting of orange leaves on the Prophet's Birthday), *doopmal* (the naming ceremony of the new-born baby) and the *kersopstiek* (the ceremonial lighting of candles on 27 Ramaḍān). These practices show just how strong the impact of eighteenth-century syncretistic mysticism had been on the cultural life of the community.¹⁶ Cultural elements from Hinduism and animistic forms of worship were also accommodated within the practices of Islam. Davids¹⁷ describes *rātib*, or *khalifa*, the eastern sword ritual, and *rampie-sny*, as innovative strategies employed by Muslims at the Cape to attract uninitiated slaves. In the process these too became part of the traditions of the Cape Muslim community.¹⁸

¹¹ F.R. Bradlow, 'The origins of the early Cape Muslims', in F.R. Bradlow and M. Cairns, *The early Muslims at the Cape* (Cape Town 1978) 91, 103, gives their origins as follows: Africa 26,65%; Ceylon 3,10%; India 36,40%; East Indies 31,47%; Mauritius 0,18%; Malaya 0,49%; others 0,40%; unidentified 1,31% .

¹² Kähler, op. cit. 454, does not clarify his remark 'dass Schaich Jussuf am Kap nicht als Mystiker, sondern lediglich als Heiliger verehrt wird'.

¹³ S. Dangor, 'In the Footsteps of the Companions: Shaykh Yusuf of Macassar (1626-1699)', in Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 19-46.

¹⁴ Da Costa in Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 131.

¹⁵ Da Costa in Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 129.

¹⁶ Davids in Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 47.

¹⁷ Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 62.

¹⁸ Achmat Davids, *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap* (Athlone: The South African Institute of Arabic and Islamic Research 1980) 33.

One of the strongest factors which favoured the spread of Sufi practices to the Cape was that many young Muslims were sent to different parts of the Islamic world to study *hifz*, or the Islamic religious sciences. While abroad they became involved in Sufi practices. Sheikh Muhammad Salih Hendricks (d.1945) was initiated into the 'Alawiyya order as a student in Mecca. Other such examples are Ahmad Behardien (d. 1973), Muhammad Tayb Jassiem (d. 1972), Abdullah Jamal al-Din (d. 1948) and Abd al-Basir (d. 1962), all figures in the Muslim community well-known for Sufi practices. In 1888 at the age of sixteen, Muhammad Salih Hendricks left Swellendam to study in Mecca. Sufism left an indelible impression on him.¹⁹ In 1919 he took steps for the construction of the Al-Zāwiya Mosque and taught large numbers of students commonly known in the Muslim community as *Zāwiya murīds*. In this way he fostered the tradition of *taṣawwuf* which had been begun by the early Muslim 'masters' at the Cape, such as Shaikh Yusuf of Faure, Tuan Guru and Tuan Sa'id.²⁰ In his classes Sheikh Hendricks undoubtedly propagated the teachings and practices of *taṣawwuf* according to the 'Alawiyya *ṭarīqa*. *Maulid al-nabī* became a major event in the annual activities of the Al-Zāwiya Mosque.²¹

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries other Sufi masters further strengthened the deep-rooted tradition of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape. They were all either 'Alawiyya sheikhs or well-versed in 'Alawiyya practices.²² The distribution of commonly-known shrines and graves of *awliyā' allāh* in the Western Cape gives some idea of the number of such masters who lived in the area. Yusuf da Costa²³ mentions nineteen such graves and shrines. Zwemer ascribed the strength of Islam at the Cape to the presence of the Qādiriyya, Rifā'iyya, Naqshbandiyya, Chishtiyya and Shādhiliyya Sufi orders in Cape Town. The Chishtiyya order is especially well represented in the Transvaal and Natal, while the Qādiriyya is stronger in the Cape.²⁴ Of those who settled here a great impact was made by Sheikh Abd al-Rahim b. Muhammad al-Iraqi (d. 1942; an 'Alawī; he 'discovered' the graves of Tuans Nur al-Nubin and Fa'far near

19 Da Costa in Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 106.

20 Da Costa in Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 111-112.

21 Da Costa in Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 112.

22 Da Costa in Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 131-135.

23 Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 133.

24 J.L. Cilliers, *Die Tabligh-beweging en sy invloed onder die Suid-Afrikaanse Moslems* (M.A. thesis, University of the Western Cape 1983) 115.

Oudekraal), Imam Abd al-Latif Qadi (d. 1917; a Chishtī; sent by Sufi Ṣāhib of Durban; established the Habibiyya Mosque complex), and Sayyid Muhsin b. Salim al-Idrus (d. 1934; from Mecca; he passed on to later generations practices such as the *ism al-laṭīf* and the *bismillāh dhikr*). Other visitors who strengthened the tradition of *taṣawwuf* were Maulana Abd al-Alim al-Siddiqi al-Qadiri from India (he visited in 1935; in 1953 he inspired the establishment of the Islamic Publications Bureau, the forerunner of the *Muslim News*; the *Habibiyya Siddique Muslim Pipe-Band Brigade*, the Siddique Primary School, and the Siddique Mosque in Elsies River are named after him); Maulana Muhammad Ibrahim Khushhtar Siddiqi al-Qadiri Razvi from Mauritius (his visits in 1968, 1970, 1978; led to the creation of branches of the *Sunni Razvi Society International* in Cape Town, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Johannesburg and Pretoria, which revived the *Halqa-e-zikr*); Maulana Fadl al-Rahman al-Ansari al-Qadiri from Pakistan (visits in 1970 and 1974); Hazrat Zayn al-Abidin al-Qadiri from India (visits in 1961, 1973 and 1983; instigated the construction of a Qādirī *khānaqāh* in Athlone in 1980²⁵); Arif-Allah Ashraf al-Chishti al-Nidhami al-Ashrafi from India (visits in 1970, 1976 and 1992); Sheikh Umar Abdullah from the Comoros (1981), Peer Bashullah Shah Ashrafi from India (visits in 1981 and 1985), and al-Haj Muhammad Ja'far Sheikh Al-Aleemi al-Qadiri from Pakistan (visited in 1985).

Imam Abdullah Kadi Abdus Salaam (Tuan Guru) exemplifies the Sufi preoccupations of the early Cape Muslims. He was brought to the Cape in 1780 and held captive on Robben Island until 1793. On his release Tuan Guru displayed the same miraculous powers as his predecessors. He met a farmer at the Riebeeck Square Market and asked him what he had in his cart. The farmer replied ironically that he had stones. Tuan Guru touched the cart, and when the farmer went to unload his produce, he found it had indeed turned into stones. It was only after he had located Tuan Guru again that the produce turned back into potatoes. Tuan Guru made use of a fortune-telling *Kitaab* for divination, as well as for remedies for all kinds of illnesses. Similarly he dispensed *azeemats* (talismans). His book on jurisprudence (*fiqh*) is interspersed with incantations and sacred cures. Oral tradition also attributes impressive miraculous powers to Tuan Said who is said to have entered the locked and guarded Slave Lodge with a Koran under his arm, without being seen by the

²⁵ *Muslim News* 12/12/1980, 19.

guards.²⁶ According to Abdul Kader Tayob the historical conditions of slavery and repression seem to have favoured the popularity of secretive and mystical forms of Islam.²⁷ Later after freedom of religion had been proclaimed in 1804, mosques were built and *madrasas* created. This meant the open establishment of Islam, based on legal and theological foundations.

The second influx of Muslims, who came from India as free traders and settled in Natal and Transvaal, also brought with them a form of Islam strongly associated with Sufi practices. According to Greyling,²⁸ it is popular among orthodox Indian Muslims to follow one of the 'saints' of a Sufi order, or *ṭarīqa*, in particular the Qādiriyya, the Naqshbandiyya and the Chishtiyya. He observed that their connection with the orders was often rather loose, but there is a commitment to the disciplines of these orders which are followed as far as possible. Many of these Muslims when they visit India or Pakistan make a point of visiting the *pīrs* of their orders.

Among the famous Sufi sheikhs of the second Muslim influx were Sheikh Ahmad Badshah Pir (d. 1894) and members of the Dabhel °Uthmānī family: Maulānā Jalāl ud-Dīn who arrived in South Africa around 1900, his brother Maulana Habibullah (who remained in his room for forty years, immersed in *dhikr allāh*), and the latter's sons Maulana Muḥammad Sa°id who died in Johannesburg in 1989, and Maulana Sufi Sayyed Muḥammad °Abed Mia who died in Lady-smith in 1945.²⁹

In 1895 Shāh Ghulām Muḥammad Habībī (d. 1911), known as Sufi Ṣāḥib, a mystic affiliated with the Chishtiyya³⁰ order, arrived in Durban from India. He also had strong connections with a second order, the Qādiriyya.³¹

It was around 1892 that Sufi Ṣāḥib, *imām* in Kalyān east of Bombay, experienced a vision of the Ka°ba in Mecca. Because of his

²⁶ Davids, *The Mosques* 17-20.

²⁷ *Al-Qalam*, March 1994, 19.

²⁸ Greyling, op. cit. 30.

²⁹ Zuleikha Mayet, 'Maulana Sūfi Sayyed Muhammad °Abed Mia °Uthmānī, Hanafi, Naqshabandi, Dabheli', *al-'Ilm* xii (Durban 1992) 38-49; 40.

³⁰ On the Chishtiyya and its teachings, see Chishtiyya, in EI ii, 50-56; cf. G.R. Smith, 'A Muslim Saint in South Africa', *African Studies* xxviii /4 (1969) passim.

³¹ For this brief discussion of the Chishtiyya, the Qādiriyya and Sufi Ṣāḥib I have drawn extensively on G.R. Smith's article. See also *Muslim Digest* xxxv/10,11 (May/June 1985) 131-133.

vision he set out to perform the pilgrimage. At the tomb of Muḥammad in Medina he experienced a sudden transformation — the beginning of his mystic career. He then went to Baghdad where the prominent Qādirī, Shāh Ghulām Muṣṭafā Efendi, accepted him as a *murīd*. After about eight months Sufi Ṣāḥib's *pīr* advised him to go to Hyderabad in India. In 1894 Sufi Ṣāḥib then became the *murīd* of the Chishtī *walī*, Ḥabīb °Alī Shāh in Hyderabad, who advised him to go to South Africa. Being spiritually guided by his *pīr*, he settled in the Riverside area of Durban where he built a mosque and a *khānqāh*. Many wished to attach themselves to Sufi Ṣāḥib as a *murīd* and in 1900 he visited India where Ḥabīb °Alī Shāh granted him the *khilāfa*, the spiritual succession awarded by the *pīr* when the *murīd* is sufficiently well versed in the disciplines of the order. In this way Sufi Ṣāḥib became part of the *silsila* leading from Ḥabīb °Alī Shāh back to the Prophet Muḥammad himself.

The performance of miracles and other extraordinary phenomena have been ascribed to Sufi Ṣāḥib. Numerous examples of his ability to foretell the future, as well as spiritual communication with his *pīr*, are cited. On the voyage from Bombay to Durban in 1895 an epidemic of dysentery broke out among the passengers. This disease was eradicated when those affected drank water specially treated by Sufi Ṣāḥib. When he settled in the Riverside district, Sufi Ṣāḥib was requested by a Hindu priest to get rid of a particularly ferocious python which was terrorising the neighbourhood. By simply asking the creature to leave, Sufi Ṣāḥib brought about its disappearance. Hindus regarded him as a man of extraordinary powers and ability. They would come to consult him in great numbers, if they were sick or had other troubles.

The small Muslim minority at the time sought to integrate themselves with the Hindu majority in South Africa. They were rapidly forgetting their obligatory Islamic practices. It was a measure of the success of Sufi Ṣāḥib that the Muslims were gradually moulded into a relatively homogeneous community. He put great emphasis on education. By choosing his assistants well and farming them out across most of Natal and other parts of southern Africa in the traditional Chishtī manner, the simple message of strict adherence to the laws of Islam was brought to the people. The °urs (death anniversary) of Sufi Ṣāḥib is to this day celebrated with special ceremonies and rituals at his *dargāh* (tomb) in Durban. His *dargāh* is still visited by many Hindus.

Over the years a serious decline in Sufism has set in. According to Kähler,³² the degeneration of Islamic mysticism at the Cape is exemplified in particular by the regular '*khalifa*'-ceremony of the Rifā'iyya during which swords, or needles, are inserted into the body. The musical instruments and the names of Muḥammad, 'Alī, Fāṭima, Hasan and Ḥusayn hint at Shii influence. In Kähler's judgement the leaders of the brotherhoods at the Cape (the Sammāniyya, the Qādiriyya and the Naqshbandiyya) are not mystics in the customary sense, but attempt by means of repeating particular formulas and prayers, along with the to-and-fro movement of the upper body, or turning about in circles, to enter into a trance and achieve supernatural powers. Cilliers³³ found that the fact that the *khalifa*-ceremony had degenerated into a commercial attraction aroused disapproval which contributed to the decline of Sufism. During the first half of the twentieth century Islam reached the lowest ebb of its existence in South Africa. Superstition became amalgamated with religious practices. Muslims, and subsequently the tenets of their faith, became associated with black magic.³⁴

Muslim scholars told the present author that their disillusionment with traditional Sufism from the nineteen-sixties on was the result of Sufism's increasing superficiality and the involvement of its adherents in unacceptable behaviour, even such as drug trafficking. At the same time a growing number of young South African Muslims enjoyed the opportunity to study in Saudi Arabia, having received generous grants from organisations like the *World Assembly of Muslim Youth*. When they came back to South Africa, they joined in the campaign against Sufism.

But Sufism, engraved as it was in the souls of the South African Muslim community, was not going to be eradicated so easily. Figures such as Maulana Abdul Hadi and Maulana Mukaddam, who are skilled in writing in English, have helped revive Sufism since the beginning of the nineteen-eighties. At the same time local Muslim publications repeatedly publicized the continuation of celebrations of the death anniversary of a Sufi saint known as an '*urs*'. One of these, the '*urs*' of Maulana Dr. Muhammad Fazl-ur-Rahman al-Ansari al-Qaderi, is commemorated annually in South Africa. The seventh

³² Kähler, op.cit. 456.

³³ Cilliers, op. cit. 115; cf. E. Adam, 'The History of Islam in South Africa', *The Muslim Digest* viii/11 (Durban, June 1958) 27-32; 27.

³⁴ Ibid. 27.

commemoration was held on 19 March 1981 by members of the Silsila Qaderiyah Aleemiyah. The *Muslim News* for a long time carried a regular feature 'Qur'ānic Foundations' which contained selections from the writings of this scholar.

The 'urs sharif of Hazrat Sultanul Auliya Ghousal Azam Abdul Qadir Jilani, founder of the Qādiriyya order, was held at the Habibia Khanqah in Rylands Estate on 13 February 1983.³⁵ On 15 April 1984 a group of forty Muslims celebrated the 'urs of Shaikh Sayed Abdurahman Matura at the Kramat on Robben Island, whereas it had been held the previous year on the Rylands Estate.³⁶ The ninetieth 'urs of Hazrat Soofie Sahib was celebrated in April 1985 by his Sufi family. The *Sunni Razvi Society International* celebrated the 'urs sharif of Maulana Ahmed Khan Qadari from 6 to 10 November 1985 in Chatsworth Durban. The 'urs was attended by three thousand people and ended with a pledge to establish an Islamic Centre.³⁷ The ninety-third annual 'urs sharif of Hazrat Shaikh Ahmad Badsha Peer (RA) took place at the khānqāh of Hazrat Soofie Sahib Badsha Peer in Durban beginning on 10 October 1987.³⁸

The revival of Sufism has also been reflected in the formation of the Cape Mazaar (Kramat) Society in 1982. The basic aim of the Society is to maintain the 'Holy Shrines of our forbears, who sowed the seeds of Islam in Southern Africa'.³⁹

A full renovation of the Sufi Ṣāḥib masjid-dargāh complex was completed in 1988 at a cost of more than R100,000,00 which is indicative of his continued popularity within the present-day community.⁴⁰ The Mazaar and the Sufi Sahib Mosque were declared national monuments by the South African Government in 1978. Sufi Ṣāḥib, the eminent benefactor of the poor, and his family have built some thirteen mosques and other institutions in South Africa including an orphanage and an Islamic nursery, thanks to which, it is claimed, Muslims since 1895 have derived, and still derive, immense spiritual, educational and material benefits.⁴¹

Before 1970 the Mouloud, the Prophet Muḥammad's birthday,

³⁵ *Muslim News* 11/2/1983, 13.

³⁶ *Muslim News* 20/4/1984, 13.

³⁷ *Al-Qalam* 10/12 December 1985.

³⁸ *Muslim Views* October 1987, 16.

³⁹ *Muslim News* 3/9/1982, 11.

⁴⁰ Mahida, Ebrahim Mahomed, *History of Muslims in South Africa: A Chronology* (Durban 1993) 45.

⁴¹ *Muslim Digest* xxxiv/11(June 1984) 260.

used to be celebrated annually by the Muslim community. At such occasions senior ulama played a leading role and would deliver the main address. After this date, however, the size and number of these celebrations increased, and the *Muslim News* published a regular "Moulood-un-nabi feature".⁴²

'Moulood' celebrations are most popular at the Cape where they are conducted through the mosques. There are many clubs called 'Moulood Jamaahs' which have either exclusively male or female membership and whose only function is the celebration of the Prophet's birthday. Their celebrations are participated in fully by the community.⁴³ *Al-Qalam* reported in January 1983 that thousands attended the 'Meelad-e-Mustapha Conference', convened by the *Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat* of South Africa from 14 to 16 January 1983 in Durban. The conference was inaugurated by Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani Siddiqui from Pakistan. Several speakers emphasised the importance of celebrating Meelad. On 22 and 23 January 1983 the *Wagdaanieyah Moulood Jamaa* of Bridgetown celebrated *Moulood-un-Nabi* at the Bridgetown Welfare Crèche, and was pleased at the overwhelming public turn-out. The *Jamaa* was formed in 1980 in an effort to perpetuate the commemoration of the birthday of the Holy Prophet. The *Jamaa* expressed the hope that the *Moulood* celebrations would become an annual event in Bridgetown.⁴⁴

In 1988 the *Hospital Welfare and Muslim Educational Movement* organised an *Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi* programme at the Good Hope Centre which drew sixteen *madrasas* and schools from all over the Peninsula and was attended by almost three thousand people.⁴⁵

Yet, *taṣawwuf* did not go unchallenged in the community. The advent of the *Tabligh Jamaat* and a new interpretation of Sufism among the ulama intensified action against traditional Sufism in the country. The ulama introduced a reform of Sufism to make it compatible with the sharia. It is questionable whether this 'reformed Sufism' promoted by the ulama can still be called Sufism. In real terms it amounted to a serious attack on Sufism because whereas traditional Sufism was ostensibly continued, it had in fact been stripped of its essential contents.

⁴² For example, *Muslim News* 16/1/1981, 2.

⁴³ Davids, *The Mosques* 25.

⁴⁴ *Muslim News* 11/2/1983, 7.

⁴⁵ *Muslim Views*, December 1988, 2.

Sufism in South Africa derived from several sources. Islam at the Cape emerged as an interesting blend of East and West, concerning which orthodox Islam has many reservations.⁴⁶ Its establishment is strongly linked to Sheikh Yusuf, a prominent Sufi *murshid* originally from the East Indies. Another line, within the Muslim community of Indian descent, was represented by Sheikh Ahmad Badshah Pir (d. 1894) and Shāh Ghulām Muḥammad Habibi (d. 1911), known as Sufi Ṣāhib.

Reformed Sufism follows yet another line⁴⁷ in which the name of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (d. 1943), a founding father of the Deobandi Dār al-ʿUlūm,⁴⁸ figures prominently. This line is adhered to by South African Muslims who studied in Jalalabad (India) where the spiritual custodian is Hadhrat Mohammed Maseehullah Khan, *khalīfa* of Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, and by the large number of graduates of Deoband⁴⁹ who follow Shaykh al-ḥadīth Maulana Muḥammad Zakariyya Sahib. Maulana Zakariyya received his Ijaazat and Khilaafat from Maulana Shaikh Khalil Ahmad Sahib in 1344 h. in Medina, but was also associated with Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, whose works he repeatedly cites as authoritative. Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi is frequently cited as an authority in the ultra-conservative tabloid *The Majlis* of Maulana A.S. Desai of Port Elizabeth (since 1976), which represents the *Majlis al-ʿulamāʾ* of South Africa (Port Elizabeth). In *madrasas* under the control of Deobandi ʿulamāʾ in the Transvaal, the study of the work *Behesti Zewar* has been introduced. Written by Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, it covers a wide range of activities and is said to be 'enormously influential'.⁵⁰

The internal conflict in the Muslim community over traditional

⁴⁶ Davids, op. cit. 1.

⁴⁷ Since the nineteen-eighties Abdul Qadir al-Murabit (Ian Dallas, who formerly also added the words 'al-Sufi al-Darqawī' to his name) and Sheikh Fadlallah Haeri have visited South Africa and acquired some followers. As yet they appear to be outside mainstream Islam in South Africa, although the Murabitun movement propagating the Mālikī *madhhab* especially among the black community has been established. An exposé of the 'true realities of Shaykh ʿAbdalqadir al-Murabit and the Murabitun World Movement' under the title 'Ian Dallas, the shaykh who has no clothes' has been circulating in South Africa recently.

⁴⁸ Nadvi Syed Habibul Haq Nadvi, *Islamic Resurgent Movements in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent* (Durban 1987).

⁴⁹ The Dār al-ʿUlūm of Deoband was founded in 1867 by Maulana Muḥammad Qāsim Nānawtawī.

⁵⁰ Yousuf Ismail Eshak, *An Educational Evaluation of the Madressa System of Religious Instruction* (Unpublished dissertation, Rand Afrikaans University 1995) 160.

Sufi practices coincided with the introduction of the *Tablīghī* movement into this country. In 1963 the *Tablīghī Jamaat* movement was introduced to South Africa from Mecca and India by Mr. G.M.I. Padia of Umzinto in Natal (who came to know the movement while on *hajj*) and Maulana Qutbuddin Kagee (who became familiar with the movement in India).⁵¹ It found fertile ground in the Transvaal and Natal provinces where it was promoted by the regional ulama bodies. The *Tablīghī* movement was opposed by modernist youth and intellectuals, as well as by the Barēlwī-group.⁵² Since the international *ijtimā'* of 1979 and the visit of Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Sahib to South Africa in 1981, the *Tablīghī Jamaat* movement has grown significantly.⁵³ Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya (born 1898) infused new life into the practice of Sufism in South Africa, but his was a *revised form of Sufism*.⁵⁴ Thus a struggle for the soul of the Muslims of South Africa began.

Although the *Tablīghī* movement made use of the infrastructure of the Sufi movement,⁵⁵ in particular it was the reinterpretation of Sufism to conform absolutely to the sharia, as preached by Maulana Zakariyya, that conquered the hearts and minds of the ulama. Consequently, the *Tablīghī Jamaat* and, even more so the ulama, initiated a process of 'cleansing' of traditional Sufi practices, which also aimed at abolishing the celebration of the Prophet's birthday. Obviously this action provoked resistance from adherents to traditional Sufism. In particular a conflict arose between the 'Deobandis' and what was branded as the 'Barelvi⁵⁶ Menace'. Traditional Sufism became associated with popular Islam, in distinction to the official Islam of the ulama.

Nevertheless, even in ulama circles an outsider is often surprised at the extent of respect paid towards a *murshid*. As Schimmel has observed, a modern man may vehemently deny miracles and saint-worship in rational debate and be highly critical of mysticism in any form, but he may then show veneration at a sacred place or respect to a person who is reported to be a saint, or who comes from an emi-

⁵¹ Cilliers, op. cit. 116-117.

⁵² Ibid. 119. It is said that Maulana Thanvi was not in favour of the *Tablīghī* movement and that the movement prohibited the reading of Thanvi's books; see Cilliers, op. cit. 120.

⁵³ Greyling, op. cit. 28.

⁵⁴ Cilliers, op. cit. 115.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 19-44, 142.

⁵⁶ On the Barēlwīs, who are the followers of Maulāwī Aḥmad Riḍā Khān of Barēli (d. 1921), see also the contribution to the present volume by Arthur Buehler., p. 468 ff.

nent family of mystics. Muhammad Iqbal more than once attacked the 'Pirism' and backwardness of the so-called 'spiritual leaders' of the Indo-Pakistani Subcontinent; a close study of his work, however, reveals that he himself followed quite closely the Sufi thought of the classical period. He employed the whole range of Sufi imagery in his poetry, though he often endowed it with a new interpretation.⁵⁷

It is in the Cape that the earliest example of outspoken opposition surfaced. In 1970 members of the *Tablīghī Jamaat* under the leadership of Abd al-Rahman Salie, Sheikh Omar Gabier, the chairman of the Muslim Judicial Council at the time, and Sheikh Abu Bakr Najjaar, then also a member of the Council, came out strongly against some of the ideas expressed by Maulana Muhammad Ibrahim Khushter during his lecture tour of the Cape Peninsula.⁵⁸ This opposition to the *taṣawwuf* perspective of Islam, as enunciated by Maulana Khushter, degenerated into attempts to disrupt the Maulana's lectures. At the time the Muslim Judicial Council refrained from taking an official stand on the issue, possibly because one of its senior members and doyen of the religious leaders in the Cape Peninsula, Sheikh Ahmad Behardien, had come out in defence of the *taṣawwuf* perspectives.⁵⁹

In the nineteen-eighties opposition to traditional Sufism became more intense and resulted in violent confrontation. On 7 March 1987 the *Mouloud-un-Nabi* programme in the Civic Centre of Azaadville, organised by the *Ahle Sunnah wal Jama'ah* (ASWJ), was disrupted. The fifty-five-year-old Mr. Shaikh Mohideen Sahib died and six people were seriously injured when the Civic Centre was stormed under the leadership of Maulana Abdul Hamid Eshaq. Two weeks earlier the *Tablīghī Jamaat* had made many threats, warning them to call off the Mouloud since the celebration of the Prophet's birthday is 'Bidat and un-Islamic'. For a whole week there were talks in the local mosque urging the people not to attend the Mouloud. The *Tablīghī Jamaat* asked the Local Committee to refuse permission for use of the Civic Centre and collected about fifteen-hundred signatures, but the Committee went ahead and granted use of the hall. On 7 March the *Ahle Sunnah Wal Jama'ah* were performing *dhikr* when six to eight hundred members of the *Tablīghī Jamaat* entered. Vio-

⁵⁷ A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill 1975) 405-406.

⁵⁸ *Muslim News* 17/7/1970.

⁵⁹ Da Costa in Da Costa and Davids. op. cit. 138.

lence erupted, windows were broken and all the food in the kitchen was thrown onto the floor. As Mohideen Sahib was being beaten, a shot was fired and a member of the *Tablighī Jamaat* was injured.

The ASWJ of Cape Town commented that: 'This despicable barbarism is the fanatical response against those who wish to honour the Holy Prophet (SAW) through the establishment of Moulood gatherings'. Maulana Abdur Rauf Soofie of Durban, who witnessed the incident, said the seeds of conflict were sown when people began declaring Moulood-un-Nabi, 'Urs and Esale-Sawaab functions to be *bid'ā* (innovation) and *shirk* (idolatry). Whereas in Durban they have managed to keep the situation under control, in Transvaal a person has actually been killed. The Muslims of Cape Town, he added, must ensure that no one is allowed to sow the seeds of discord. Sheikh Nazeem Mohammed, President of the Muslim Judicial Council, called the killing a sad moment in the history of South African Muslims. He noted that the dispute concerning the recitation of *ṣalawāt* (prayers in honour of Muḥammad in the mosque) and *raatiboel haddad* (a combination of litanies and invocations) is so deep that it has endured for centuries ever since these practices were introduced to this country by our forefathers.

Mosques were appropriated in the name of a particular group and the Friday sermon used to propagate the interpretations of that group. Mosques of the Barēlwī group were closed to the *Tablighī* supporters, and the other way round. In January 1981 Sheikh Umar Abdullah from the Comoros was barred by members of the *Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat* and the MJC from delivering a lecture in the local mosque in Uitenhage, because 'these people' were indulging in practices contrary to Sunni Islam.⁶⁰ In July 1982 a Maulana and an Imam engaged in a power struggle in the Surrey Estate Mosque that threatened to develop into armed conflict.⁶¹

A conference on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday at the Sparks Road Mosque in Durban from 14 to 16 January 1983 was described as one of the most successful gatherings of its kind held in the country. More than ten-thousand people attended the conference which revolved around the personality of the beloved Prophet Muḥammad and was organised by the *Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat*. The conference took note of the 'constant attacks made on the personality

⁶⁰ *Muslim News* 16/1/1981, 1.

⁶¹ *Muslim News* 16/7/1982, 7.

of the Prophet not only from those who are non-Muslims but also those who claim to be Muslims'. The resolutions included that the ban imposed by the Saudi authorities on the Urdu translation of the Holy Koran by Ala Hazrat Maulana Ahmad Raza Khan of Bareilvi be lifted immediately, and that the Qadiani and Wahhābī sects be totally rejected by all Muslims. It declared that the Wahhābī attacks on the Prophet and Allah (e.g. that Allah has the power to lie) constituted *kufr*.⁶² In South Africa the Wahhābīs were associated with the *Tablīghī movement*.

In January 1985 *Al-Qalam* reported that the feud between the *Sunni Jamaat* (Bareilvi group) and the *Tablīghī Jamaat*, particularly in the Grey Street mosque in Durban, had escalated over the preceding two years from verbal to physical aggression. Two weeks earlier the followers of both groups had exchanged strong words and come to blows after the *ṣalāt al-‘ishā’* in the Grey Street mosque. As the conflict between these two groups intensified over the years, they had begun to entrench themselves in the respective mosques. The mosques had come under ideological siege, as each group tried to impose its understanding of Islam on the rest of the community. The battle was directed from the *mihrāb*, particularly on Fridays.

In January 1985 Maulana Abdul Hadi came to Cape Town at the request of *musallees* of the Jumah Masjid in Westridge, Mitchells Plain, for the celebration of a *Moulood-un-Nabi*. The Mosque Committee disapproved and permission was refused by the Imam of the Mosque. There were also objections to the presence of Maulana Abdul Hadi. A hasty meeting convened between the *Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat* of South Africa (ASWJ) and the Muslim Judicial Council allowed the *Moulood-un-Nabi* celebration to go ahead since it was agreed that the function did not violate any Islamic principle. The great success of the function and the realisation of the importance of *Moulood-un-Nabi* celebrations led the previously hesitant Mosque Committee to decide to hold the celebration every year.⁶³ There was obviously much sympathy for the *Moulood-un-Nabi* among the general public. The MJC wished to comply with these feelings.

The *Majlis* advised against the building of rival mosques:

'We find a situation where a group of the Sunnah intends to set up its own Musjid because the Ahl-e-Bid'ah in control of the existing Musjid disallow our Ulamā from lecturing in the

⁶² *Muslim News* 28/1/1983, 5.

⁶³ *Muslim News* 21/6/1985, 12.

Musjid or prevent Kitaab-reading or other Tableegh activities in which the people of Haqq are involved... this is not a valid reason for setting up an opposition Masjid... the purpose of the Masjid is Salaat... as long as masallis are not hindered in their duty of Salaat, there is no need to set up another Masjid'.⁶⁴

At the start of 1983 a crowd of almost four-thousand attended the inauguration of the Darul Uloom Aleemiyah Razvia⁶⁵ — built at a cost of R250,000 in Chatsworth, Durban — and heard all the speakers laud the opening of the institution as a major step in 'keeping the flame of Islam alive' in this country. It is the first Darul Uloom of the *Ahle Sunnah wal Jamaat* in South Africa. Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani Siddiqui, son of Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddiqui, alluded to the disunity existing among the Muslims of South Africa. He posed the question whether there was disunity when Hazrat Badsha Peer and Hazrat Sufi Sahib established Islam in this country and whether Maulana Shah Ahmad Mukhtar Siddiqui and Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddiqui brought disunity:

'We are the followers of Hazrat Badsha Peer and Hazrat Soofie Sahib, and this Darul Uloom has been built to safeguard their moral preachings. And Hazrat Badsha Peer and Hazrat Soofie Sahib were the followers of Sultanul Hind Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, who in turn was the follower of the Holy Prophet. Disunity is caused by the new ideas of people who differ from Hazrat Badsha Peer and Hazrat Soofie Sahib, who were in turn followers of the Prophet Muhammad'.⁶⁶

In 1985, Maulana Ibrahim Adam, then a member of the Fatwah Committee of the Muslim Judicial Council, attacked the *taṣawwuf* tradition in Islam in a lecture entitled the 'Barelvi Menace'.⁶⁷ This lecture caused a furore. In March 1985 the ASWJ organised a function in Athlone to answer Molvi Ebrahim Adam's challenge. It was attended by about fifteen-hundred people. The ulama who represented the ASWJ were Maulana Abdul Hadi, Maulana Mukaddam, Maulana Abdur Rauf Soofi and Mufti Naseem Ashraf Habibi, principal of the Darul Uloom Aleemiyah Razvia in Chatsworth, Natal.⁶⁸ Maulana Adam refused to make an appearance to present his

⁶⁴ *The Majlis* viii/5; *The Muslim Digest* xxxix/5&6 (Dec. 1988/Jan. 1989) 44.

⁶⁵ In 1984 the Darul Uloom had sixty-five full-time and twenty-five part-time students. Additional land has been bought under the condition that buildings to the value of at least R 200,000.00 will soon be erected there (Mahida, op. cit. 125).

⁶⁶ *Muslim News* 11/2/1983, 15.

⁶⁷ *Muslim News* 15/3/1985.

⁶⁸ *Muslim Digest* March/April 1985.

case.⁶⁹ The matter eventually fizzled out.⁷⁰

Since its establishment on the occasion of an awareness meeting in May 1984, the *Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat of SA (Cape)* has made great progress, far beyond its own expectations. The awareness meeting was attended by Mufti Ghulam Sarwar Al-Qaderi, Maulana Abdul Hadi Al-Qaderi, Maulana Ahmad Mukaddam Al-Qaderi, Sheikh Abubakr Abdur Rauf, Professor Hassen Al-Qaderi, Sheikh Mohammed Karlu, Sheikh Nazeem Mohammed, Imam Karjiekier, Dr. A.K. Wahab, Dr. Mohideen Khan and many other community leaders.⁷¹ The support and attendance of about seven-hundred people emphasised the need for an awareness programme.⁷²

The ASWJ successfully organised lecture tours by Maulana Abdul Hadi, Maulana Mukaddam and Maulana Abdur Rauf Soofi. All these lectures were well received by the public to the extent that numerous requests have been received by the ASWJ to bring more ulama of their calibre to the Cape for lecture tours. Maulana Mukaddam delivered lectures in December 1984 at the Habibia Masjid, Masjid-us-Salaam (St Athans Road), Cravenby Masjid and at the Ghousia Manzil in Rylands. In his lecture on *Moullood-un-Nabie* he outlined the reason for this great celebration and removed all doubts that there was any *bidat* attached to it.⁷³ Soon afterwards Maulana Soofi returned to Cape Town for a series of lectures at the Park Road Mosque in Wynberg, Cravenby Mosque, Bridgetown Mosque, Bonteheuwel Mosque, Ghousia Manzil, Westridge Mitchells Plain Mosque and Grassy Park Mosque.

While in South Africa on a visit from Pakistan in 1989, Maulana Kaukab Noorani Okarvi challenged the *Jamiat ul-‘ulamā’* of Transvaal and Natal and Maulana Ebrahim Adam of Stellenbosch (who had widely disseminated taped lectures about the ‘Barelvi menace’) to discuss causes of division in the South African Muslim community. The challenge was not taken up.⁷⁴

Since the beginning of the controversy at least two *Dār al-‘ulūms* had been established in the Transvaal area along the lines of the ulama who do not support the traditional Sufi approach: the *Dār al-‘ulūm* Zakariyya (built after the visit of Sheikh Muhammad Zaka-

⁶⁹ *Muslim News* 15/3/1985.

⁷⁰ Da Costa in Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 138.

⁷¹ *Muslim News* 21/6/1985, 12.

⁷² *Muslim News* 21/6/1985, 12.

⁷³ *Muslim News* 21/6/1985, 12.

⁷⁴ *Muslim Views* Jan.-Feb. 1989, 3.

riyya in 1983, with more than two-hundred students today) and the *Dār al-ʿulūm* of Azaadville.

The *Sunni Razvi Jamaat* of Durban published as a supplement to the *Muslim News* of 31 July 1970 a definition of *bidʿa* which was overtly aimed against the Tablighī movement. A letter to the *Muslim News* in May 1983,⁷⁵ signed 'The Observer', distinguished between Tablighī Maulanas (who had established themselves in South Africa over the previous twenty years and tell Muslims what is and is not true Islam) and other Maulanas, strangely known as 'Holy Men'. The letter pointed out that such titles could only originate from India where Holy Men of all sorts abound. The letter called on Muslims to adhere to the immutable law of the Holy Koran and the Sunnah and the noble examples of the Khulafa — a subtle attack on Sufis, implying that the latter are perpetuating Hindu practices. In 1984 the *Muslim News* carried a series of three articles on Sufism. The second article⁷⁶ implicitly justified and promoted traditional Sufism, in distinction to the pronouncements of the ulama.

The most outspoken criticism of traditional Sufism in South Africa is contained in numerous issues of the *The Majlis*. The *Majlis* also announced that the Y.M.M.A. of Benoni had published a book in reply to an earlier book called '*Tableeghi Jamaat*' which abounds with distortions, half-truths and makeshift interpretations to suit the views and aims of the *Qabar Pujaari Jamaat of Durban*.⁷⁷ According to the *Muslim Youth Movement*, the fight was about 'Deen': 'Each group was claiming to have the right and correct idea of what the Deen is all about. Both groups express their love for the Prophet in word and deed in different ways.'

The two books mentioned in *The Majlis* belong to the spate of books and brochures on the issue of Sufism which have seen the light of publication in South Africa since the beginning of the nineteen-eighties, when anti-government action began in earnest, and after centuries of silence. Most of these books were from the reformist camp indicating a firm will to confront traditional Sufism.

In November 1984 a spokesman of the ASWJ said the *Jamaat* is not a new movement since throughout history the Ahle Sunnah line has been followed by leading ulama and the noble souls who brought

⁷⁵ *Muslim News* 20/5/1983, 13.

⁷⁶ *Muslim News* 4/5/1984, 14.

⁷⁷ *The Majlis* viii/ 12.

the message of Islam to South Africa.⁷⁸ Arguments invoked in favour of traditional Sufism include: the claim that controversial Sufi practices were already current in the lifetime of the Prophet Muḥammad; they accord due honour to the Prophet in face of constant attacks against his person by people who profess to be Muslims; Sufism was practised in this country for centuries after it had been brought here by the forefathers, without any controversy; the chain of authorities attesting these practices is impeccable (Hazrat Badsha Peer and Hazrat Soofie Sahib were the followers of Sultanul Hind Khwaja Moinuddin Chishtī, who in turn was the follower of the Holy Prophet).

*The Muslim Digest*⁷⁹ rejected the arguments of the Deobandi/Wahhābī Najdī schools of thought against the celebration of the Prophet's birthday and pointed out that Hajji Imdadullah Mohajir al-Makki and Rashid Ahmed Gangohi, the great Sufi, Wali and Murshid of the Ulemas of Deoband, as well as Ashraf Ali Thanvi, Mohammed Kassim Nanotvi (the founder of the Daarul Ulum Deoband) and Khalil Ahmed Anbethvi, celebrated the Mauloodun Nabi every year and gave lectures at these functions. Moreover, the Prophet himself used to offer a feast to his Companions on the night of his birth. When Abū Bakr was caliph, he used to call the Companions to assemble on the mawlood night, and they would talk about the miraculous events that took place when Rasūlullah had honoured the world with his presence. All four rightly-guided caliphs recommended the mawlood nabi. Hadrat Maulana Jalal ad-din Rumi declared that the places where Mawlood was read would be safe from calamities and disasters. It is stated in a *ḥadīth* that if Allāh endows one of His servants with the art of writing and speech, he should eulogise Rasūlullah and censure the latter's enemies. In his book *Dalā'il Khayrāt*, Hadrat Muhammad b. Sulaymān al-Jazūlī explains the importance and the benefits of pronouncing *ṣalawāt* on Rasūlullah, and then gives a list of the *ṣalawāt* extracted from *ḥadīths* and those recited by the Companions which he had collected himself. The *Muslim Digest* suggested that the celebration of the Prophet's birthday be used in the new South Africa to promote *da'wa* among non-Muslims.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ *Muslim News* 25/1/1985, 7.

⁷⁹ *The Muslim Digest* 44/7&8 (Feb./March 1994) 258-259.

⁸⁰ *The Muslim Digest* 40/8&9 (March/April 1990) 29; 44/7&8 (February/March 1994), 257-263.

In an article justifying traditional Sufi practices in South Africa in the *Muslim News*,⁸¹ the author noted that alleviating the sufferings of humanity is a great service rendered by a Sufi. The Sufi participates in the sorrows of man as well as his joys. It is the example of the prophets which a Sufi follows. The only duty which all prophets of Allah had imposed on people was: 'Serve Allah, and eschew Evil' (Koran 16/36). The history of Islam bears witness that this was not effectively fulfilled either by religious scholars (*'ulamā'*) or by jurists (Faqeeh) or by rulers (Salaateen) but only by the Sufis, whose name the common people still repeat with love and veneration. The difference between a scholar and a Sufi was explained as follows:

'The sacred teachings of Islam, published in the books and taught in the schools, are fully practised by the Sufis in their khanqahs. The Sufis kept alive the spiritual and moral values of Islam. No one but the Sufis have contributed so much to the character building of the people. They always had the courage of speaking the truth in the face of wrathful rulers. When the so-called rationalism penetrated into the thoughts of the Muslims and subjected the Qur'ān to the rationalists' intellectual whims, the Sufis came forward to remove its evil effects by inculcating love for Allah in the people. When certain Muslim scholars laid stress on the outward manifestation of the religion, the Sufis emphasised the purity of the hearts as well, thus maintaining for the people a middle path to tread. The Sufis always repudiated un-Islamic beliefs and polytheistic ideas (Shirk). The Sufis preached treading in the way of Allah (*Infaaq Fee Sa-beelilah*) against the tendency to amass wealth. The Sufis preached Islam to the kings. When certain Muslim scholars were creating schisms and hatred in the Muslim polity, the Sufis were preaching love and harmony. When certain Muslim scholars indulged in declaring each other infidel, the Sufis converted infidels to the fold of Islam. While the scholars and the jurists generally sought high positions in the State and desired proximity with the rulers, the Sufis kept themselves at a distance from the kings and exposed the element of corruption from outside. While certain scholars initiated the controversy of the existence of Allah with or without His Attributes, the Sufis discouraged such fruitless debate and, instead, advised people to purify their hearts in order to have Allah's perception. While certain scholars had been applying their energy and learning in giving different interpretations to the words of Allah, the Sufis were only generating His fear in the hearts of the people. While the scholars nourished the mind, the Sufis purified and invigorated the heart, which is the pivot of a Muslim's spiritual life'.

The article concluded with an anecdote relating how an Imam knows the Book of Allah, whereas the Sufi knows Allah Himself. That is why the Sufi's status was far higher than that of the Imam.

81 *Muslim News* 4/5/1984, 14.

Arguments which recur in the present debate against traditional Sufism include: customs such as the celebration of the Prophet's birthday are *bid'ā* and un-Islamic; it is *shirk* to venerate holy men; such veneration is a survival of Hindu practices. Critics of traditional Sufi practices claim not to be against Sufism in principle. Their objection is that Sufis, under the cover of Sufism, are spreading different beliefs and practices among the masses who had already contracted various forms of *shirk* through the influence of the polytheistic culture of India. The critics support Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1624) who defended the sharia against Sufi preachers who believed that the sharia was an empty form devoid of the reality which they sought in their *ṭarīqa*. These Sufis exalt their *kashf* (intuition) over the *wahy* (revelation) of the Prophet; they do not recoil from saying that the real *tawhīd* was in Ibn al-ʿArabī's philosophy of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (Ansari 1986). These Sufis are branded as *Ahl-e-Bid'ah*, as a group of 'grave-worshippers' who 'exercise absolutely no Islamic Hijaab (Purdah) whatever'.⁸²

Some people call in supplication upon Hadhrat Sayyid Abdul Qaadir Jilaani to hear them and take their *duʿāʾ* to Allah. The underlying belief is *shirk* and *ḥarām*: 'It is not lawful to call out in supplication in this manner nor is it permissible to hold the *shirk* (polytheistic) belief that a saint has power to answer and attend to one's supplication'.⁸³ *The Majlis* is against the practice of 'so-called "Islamic Faqeers"' who are alleged to plunge knives and swords into their bodies without inflicting harm on themselves.⁸⁴ *The Majlis* recommends the Tabligh Jamaat, since it 'does not introduce new ideas and new practices into the Deen. The Tabligh Jamaat does not advocate a religion based on an individual's opinion. The aim of the Tabligh Jamaat is to revive and teach the very same Sunnah practices of Rasulullah...'⁸⁵

In 1987, *The Majlis* used the complete front page and a section of the back page to attack 'the curse of grave-worship' in strong language.⁸⁶ It is claimed that the *Qabar Pujaari Jamaat of Durban* was involved in desperate schemes and conspiracies to bolster its faltering movement. 'Some years earlier laymen were easily beguiled into accepting the acts of qabar puja (grave-worship) which

⁸² *The Majlis* vii(1987)/1.

⁸³ *The Majlis* vii (1987)/1.

⁸⁴ *The Majlis* vi (1986)/9.

⁸⁵ *The Majlis* vi (1986)/9.

⁸⁶ *The Majlis* vii(1987)/9.

the members of this idolatrous cult were deceptively propagating under the guise of Islam and under the banner of Hubbe Rasool (Love for the Rasool). However, the efforts of the Ulamā-e-Haqq have borne wonderful fruit over the years in that former qabar pujaaris and bid'atis have seen the Light of Haqq and have come over to the Path of the Sunnah by the thousand'. As a result of mass reversions to the Path of the Sunnah by former supporters of the Bid'ati Qabar Pujaari Jamaat, the revenue of this sect has decreased drastically. They are therefore 'presently engaged in an all-out effort of life and death to win back their former supporters and to prevent further mass crossing to the Haqq'. 'The Qabar Pujaari sect is akin to the Shiahs in the expression of hatred and malice for the Ahlus Sunnah... Muslims should be on their guard against these semi-Shiah worshippers of graves. Their religion of rituals consists of only the clamour of "Hubbe Rasool", the slogan of Takbeer, rituals of grave-worship, merry-making festivals, singing, dancing, qawwaali headed by dagga-smoking qawwaals (singers), feasting and skinning ignorant people of their money in the names of the dead Auliya of Allah Ta'ala'. The same issue of *The Majlis* contains an article condemning the celebration of the Prophet's birthday.

In other issues *The Majlis*⁸⁷ deals with allegations of the Barelvi group who have branded Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, a founding member of Deoband, as a *kāfir*. The periodical attacks the Qabar Pujaari sect as grave-worshippers because they 'make tawaaf of the graves of saints; they make sajdah to the graves and they make dua to the saints in the graves'.⁸⁸

Relations between the Sufis and the rulers were often strained, since the mystics were not favourable to any contact that might pollute their pure intentions. That is why the dervish is often made the mouthpiece of social criticism: he puts his finger on the wound of society and points to the corrupt state of affairs.⁸⁹ Some of the fundamentalist Muslim leaders, like Ḥasan al-Bannā³, the founder of the Muslim Brothers, came from a background of strong connections with Sufi orders: it was from the Sufis that he learned his methods of channelling the enthusiasm of people into religious activities.⁹⁰ The

⁸⁷ *The Majlis* viii (1988)/1; see also x (1990)/1.

⁸⁸ *The Majlis* viii (1988)/4.

⁸⁹ Schimmel, op. cit. 111.

⁹⁰ Ibid. 404.

Chishtīs refused to have dealings with the worldly government. This mistrust of government became more outspoken with the Chishtī saints, who considered everything in the hands of the rulers to be unlawful.⁹¹ Traditional Sufism has a special appeal to ordinary Muslims, who could easily identify with the principles of poverty and immediate contact with God which obviates extensive study. The central attitude in Sufi life is that of *faqr*, 'poverty'. The Koran (35/16) expresses a contrast between man who is in dire need of God, and God, the ever Rich, the Self-sufficient, and here lies one of the roots of the Sufi concept of poverty. Poverty was an attribute of the Prophet. There are numerous legends about the destitute state and the poverty of his household and the members of his family.⁹²

There was a period of good relations between the traditional Sufi movement and the former South African government. This is implied by the mere fact that *The Muslim Digest* of Durban used to publish a letter of goodwill to the Muslim community from the head of the white Nationalist government in the annual Ramadan prestige edition: first it was Dr. D.F. Malan; in April 1958 Nationalist Prime Minister J.G. Strydom; in March 1959 Dr. H.F. Verwoerd; in 1984 and in 1985 Mr. P.W. Botha. This custom has been discontinued since the 1986 issue. It was, in fact, on 20 April 1985 that the presence of Nationalist Minister Barend du Plessis at the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Orient Islamic Institute resulted in a walk-out led, among others, by Maulana Abdur Rauf Soofi, Imam of the Westville Masjid.⁹³

It is no coincidence that Sufism — formerly so inconspicuous as to make well-informed researchers brand it as of little consequence — was coming to the fore at a time when anti-government sentiments amongst Muslims were reaching a high point. Thus the *Ahle Sunnat Wa Jamaat of SA* (Cape) was established in May 1984. It may be indicative of the previous effective marginalisation of practices of Muslims who were not part of the (colonial/white) political and the recognised religious (ulama) establishment. The ulama were often accused of being handmaidens of the Apartheid government.

Underlying political tensions in the conflict between ulama and Sufis are apparent from Sheikh Abdul Kariem Toffar's rejection in November 1980 of any implication that the death of Imam Abdullah

⁹¹ Ibid. 345-351.

⁹² Ibid. 120.

⁹³ *Muslim News* 3/5/1985, 3.

Haroon (d. 27/9/1969) in detention could be commemorated as that of a martyr in the freedom struggle. He referred to 'the real interpretation as per Islamic Law principles and fundamentals'. Not even the death and birth of the Nabi is to be 'commemorated' because 'the Prophet never allowed it in his lifetime, also not the saḥābah and khulafa after him, for fear of deifying him (like the Christians did to Nabi Isa and their saints). Only 500 years after the death of Muḥammad did the Fatimids of Egypt, who were Shia-inclined in doctrine and law, first celebrate the "commemoration" of the birth/death of the nabi'.⁹⁴ On the occasion of the thirteenth anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Haroon in 1982, *Qibla*, the Muslim mass movement of the oppressed people, conducted commemoration campaigns throughout the country: 'Martyrdom is the highest expression of our freedom to choose.' Here again there is the combination of anti-establishment politics and anti-establishment Islam.⁹⁵ Reporting on the 1983 commemoration of Imam Haroon when *Qibla*-member Ridwaan Craayenstein outlined a five-point programme for conducting the struggle, *Muslim News* complained that there was 'as usual, the conspicuous absence of the ulema of the Western Cape; the very people who were the colleagues of Imam Abdullah Haroon'.⁹⁶

When the ulama appealed to South African Muslim youth in August 1982 not to support the revolutionary government of Iran, Muslim students who clashed with Zionist students at Witwatersrand University labelled the *Jami'atul 'ulamā'* and the Tablighī supporters as 'sterile puppets' of the Apartheid government. They pointed out that the South African mullahs and the Tablighīs never condemned the oppressive laws here, especially the Group Areas Act which collectively removed Muslims from Pageview and elsewhere; never hit out at racial education and the persecution of school children during the boycotts; never condemned Zionism which had murdered innocent children, women and old men in Palestine and Lebanon; never condemned Saudi Arabia's immoral stranglehold over the Haram Sharif knowing full well that the Saudis gambled, fornicated and indulged in extravagant spending; never condemned Saudi Arabia's Rabitah agents in South Africa, knowing full well that the Saudis are

⁹⁴ *Muslim News* 28/11/1980, 5.

⁹⁵ *Muslim News* 24/9/1982, 20.

⁹⁶ *Muslim News* 30/9/1983, 16.

supporting America, Israel and other imperialist powers.⁹⁷

Concerned Muslims (a pseudonym for anti-government Muslims in the Cape) organised a mass *jum'ca* for 16 December 1983 to establish a united stand in the Muslim community on 'education and economics'. The idea stemmed from the Islamic Awareness Program that was held every Wednesday at the Habibia Centre. The ulama of the Muslim Judicial Council rejected the idea, but it is interesting that the mass *jum'ca* was motivated by a mass *jum'ca* held by Tuan Guru in a disused quarry at the top of Strand Street in Cape Town. 'Bearing in mind that from 1657 to 1804 anybody who spread Islam in public could be sentenced to death, Tuan Guru organised the *jum'cah* in defiance of the law'.⁹⁸ As it happened police prevented the mass *jum'ca* which was eventually scheduled for 28 December 1985 at the Johnson Road sportsground, and fifty-seven people were arrested.⁹⁹

In May 1983 it was reported that the Cape Town Branch of the (Sufi) *Sunni Razvi Society International* lodged a serious protest against the 'Saudi government's fatwa' that banned copies of an Urdu translation of the Koran, made by the 'illustrious mujaddid', Ala Hazrat Maulana Ahmad Raza Khan of Bareilvi in India. The Society called upon Muslims world-wide to add their voices to the protest. This call had been preceded by a similar call from the *Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat* in their meeting in January 1983.¹⁰⁰

In a letter to the *Muslim News*¹⁰¹ S. Malick of Athlone made the following points against Wāḥḥābism in support of Maulana Abdur Rauf Soofi: Muhammad Abdul Wāḥḥāb found willing allies in Ibn Saud and the British colonialists against the Turks. Abdul Wāḥḥāb felt that the Turks were promoting un-Islamic beliefs because of their love and respect for the Prophet and the holy saints of Islam. Ibn Saud felt that the Turks were holding power in what he believed was his country. The British saw the destruction of the Ottoman Empire as a defeat for pan-Islamism which stood between their colonialist designs and the Muslim lands. Today the Wāḥḥābis are willing pawns of Washington against Iran because 'their warped beliefs do not tolerate the veneration of the Prophet (SAW) and His House as displayed by the Muslims in Iran'. The Tablighīs who believe they

⁹⁷ *Muslim News* 3/9/1982, 4.

⁹⁸ *Muslim News* 1/12/1983, 1, 20.

⁹⁹ *Muslim News* 25/1/1985, 3.

¹⁰⁰ See above page 395.

¹⁰¹ *Muslim News* 29/3/1985, 4.

are serving the cause of Islam by preaching Islam to Muslims, should realise that they are servants of the Wahhābī political conspiracy.¹⁰²

Qibla, the *Call of Islam*, the *Muslim Youth Movement* and the *Muslim Students' Association* condemned the interruption of the *Moulood-un-Nabi* programme organised by the *Ahle Sunnah wal Jamaah* of Azaadville in March 1987 and said it is ironical that those very elements who use violence against Muslims, cower in the face of institutionalised and state violence of the Botha regime which is perpetrated against innocent South Africans on a daily basis.¹⁰³

The combination of 'Sufi Islam' with political revolt — as an alternative to state-associated ulama Islam — was again illustrated by the appeal of the President of the Muslim Judicial Council, Sheikh Nazeem Mohammed, the director of the *Muslim Youth Movement*, Maulana Ebrahim Moosa and Cassim Parker of the *Islamic Student Society* of the University of Cape Town that the Muslim public partake in a *halqa-e-dhikr* as a means of showing solidarity with those who are in detention and facing trial. It was expected that the call for a centralised *halqa-e-dhikr* would meet with a positive response especially in view of its historical roots in Cape Town. When the pioneers of Islam came to this part of the world they faced severe persecution. Although the Muslims were few in number, their oppressors shuddered at the spiritual might of such luminaries as Shaikh Yusuf, Shaikh Sayyid Nurul Mubeen, Tuan Guru and others, for the latter had invoked the protection of Almighty Allah through the exercise of *dhikr Allāh*.¹⁰⁴

The *Muslim Youth Movement* was worried that the dispute between the *Tablighī Jamaat* and the *Sunni Jamaat* would be detrimental to Muslim participation in the liberation struggle. They branded it as more emotional than rational¹⁰⁵ and a fight over marginal issues: 'Both groups have been trying to gain control over the two percent Muslim community, fighting for control of the mosques and territory within that laager. If only they could adjust their vision and commit themselves to the mission to liberate the rest of the country from man-made ideologies'. The theological debate between the two groups has been imported from the Indian sub-continent. It has

¹⁰² *Muslim News* 29/3/1985, 4.

¹⁰³ *Muslim Views* March 1987, 1-2.

¹⁰⁴ *Muslim Views* March 1988, 3.

¹⁰⁵ *Al-Qalam* 3/13 March 1987.

nothing to do with real Islamic issues and the dynamics of the South African situation. 'The sooner we export this divisive theological nit-picking back to the Indian Subcontinent, the better our chances of getting on with the task of building our country into a land where all the children of Adam will be honoured and their rights upheld. Our dilemma in South Africa is that Muslim leaders have let us down'.

Since the middle of the nineteen-sixties, with the introduction of the Tablighī movement and the line of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, ulama have demanded a drastic reform of Sufism in which the birthday of the Prophet, the veneration of saints and other similar customary practices are rejected as being *shirk*, and not part of 'true Sufism'. This reform, largely initiated by the ulama has evoked strong opposition in circles fearing the abolition of Sufi practices. The result has been a revival of conscious commitment to Sufism which has become an alternative to the state-associated ulama, and an ongoing conflict which also has political overtones.

Thus today there are two separate dominant groups representing opposite interpretations of Islam, both organised in *ṭarīqas*, both claiming adherence to Sufism. The two camps follow the organisational structure of Sufism. But the one emphasises a simplistic kind of ascetism, with the absolute transcendence of God, with no intermediaries and total conformity with the sharia. The other makes much of the graves of Sufi spiritual guides, their intercession and the Prophet's birthday. The former enjoys the blessings of the ulama, the latter bears their fierce criticism.

As far as the ulama are concerned, the 'cleansing' process may mean initially maintaining the outward forms of Sufi practices, with the aim of ultimately destroying them. The practice of 'commemoration' has gone so far over the last nine-hundred years that it is nigh impossible to forgo the Nabi's birth or death celebrations. Thus the ulama ruled that the occasion should be used to enlighten the people about true Islam and its practices, thereby circumventing the commemoration entirely but still reaping a positive and practical benefit from the occasion.¹⁰⁶

Sufism in South Africa can be associated with popular Islam, as against the official Islam of the ulama Sufism — formerly so inconspicuous as to make a well-informed researcher like Greyling remark that it was of little consequence — has been strongly coming to the

¹⁰⁶ *Muslim News* 28/11/1980, 5.

fore since the nineteen-seventies. The situation before 1970 may be seen as indicative of the effective marginalisation of the practices of ordinary Muslims who were not part of the ruling (colonial/white) political and the religious (ulama) establishment.

In the past there was a tendency to see the dichotomy between theological Islam and common Muslim practices (popular Islam) as reflecting a duality based on religious intuition and theological reason — ‘strong’ official Muslims and ‘weak’, common or inconsequential Muslims. Maulana Ahmad Mukaddam found this attitude consistent with a domineering approach useful for the purpose of colonising peoples through the power of religion.¹⁰⁷

History clearly reflects the relationship between religion and power. What may have been juridically acceptable under the Umayyads may not have been so during Abbasid rule. What Wahhābism labels ‘un-Islamic’ may have been sanctioned as ‘permissible’ by the Islamic judiciary when the Turks held the reigns of power. That the ideas of the dominant are the dominant ideas is a political-historical fact.¹⁰⁸ The change of political power in the new South Africa will inevitably also have some effect on its Muslim community in terms of power structures. One can expect — ‘despite the conservatism of particular religious orthodoxies — that religious activities will change when the assumptions about the nature of power, and hence the rules which govern its use and control, can no longer guarantee the truth of things’.¹⁰⁹

In South Africa the ulama were often accused of being hand-maidens of the Apartheid government, at conspicuous variance with the refusal of Sufi Ṣāḥib to have anything to do with government institutions. It is not difficult to relate religion to class struggle. It is well-known that political prisoners converted to Islam in prison as an additional act of defiance against the Apartheid government, and in the past Muslim political activists under Dutch rule and under the Nationalist Party government may have been incarcerated on the basis of their religious convictions which ran counter to the religio-

¹⁰⁷ See Maulana Ahmad Mukaddam, ‘Muslim Common Religious Practices at the Cape: A Search for Definition’ (Unpublished paper read at the conference on *Approaches to the Study of Islam and Muslim Societies*, University of Cape Town 17-19 July 1991; 21 pages). In this section we follow his most informative perspective on these issues, in particular on the power struggle involved. Maulana Mukaddam is himself a representative of the Barēlwi tradition in South Africa.

¹⁰⁸ Mukaddam, op. cit. 13-14.

¹⁰⁹ K. Burridge, *New Heaven New Earth* (Oxford 1980) 7.

political interests of the dominant group.¹¹⁰ Today popular Islam may no longer be restricted to the socio-economically deprived class of Cape Muslim Society. As Mukaddam describes it: 'Access to power, in our case sacred power, is sought and where it is not available in face of countervailing power systems, symbolic actions, reactions and negotiations take place either to re-appropriate the lost power or to compensate for the destabilising dis-empowerment'.¹¹¹

The ulama as puritan Muslim authorities consider popular Islam as superstition, miracle-mongering, tomb-worship, mass hysteria and charlatanism from which Muslim society has to be reclaimed for Islam.¹¹² Such a view is an attempt to dis-empower popular Islam. Control over central symbols guarantees religio-political dominance. Thus Wahnābism, an official form of Islam that espouses an absolutist, puritanical interpretation of Islam, exploits its religious monopoly of permanent custodianship of Islam's holiest places, Mecca and Medina, in order to justify sustained political hegemony over 'Saudi' Arabia, which is the prime motive and interest of the Saudi kings.¹¹³ In the past advocates of puritan Islam have always rejected the popular movement totally, even as they do at present. In the new South Africa Sufism as a popular movement is likely to re-appropriate lost ground or at least to maintain its hold, and to do so more openly.

In 1994 three hundred years of Islam since the coming of Sheikh Yusuf, one of the original founders of the tradition of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape, was commemorated. In the words of Yusuf da Costa: 'This celebration gives community recognition, at least, to the impact of the *taṣawwuf* tradition on the lives of the Muslims at the Cape. At most, the celebration implies the recognition of the religious validity of the *taṣawwuf* perspective in Islam'.¹¹⁴

On 14 October 1994 a ten-member executive of the newly established united ulama body, the *United Ulama Council of South*

¹¹⁰ Mukaddam, op. cit. 6, 19.

¹¹¹ Mukaddam, op. cit. 7.

¹¹² Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (Chicago 1979) 246.

¹¹³ Mukaddam, op. cit. 10, drives this connection between puritanism and power politics home by quoting P.K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs* (London 1967) 740: 'The new prophet found in Muhammad ibn Saud (d. 1765), [founder of the Saudi dynasty] who was then a petty chief in Central Arabia, an ally and son-in-law. This was another case of marriage between religion and the sword, resulting in the speedy spread of religion [Wahnābism] and of the authority of ibn Saud throughout Central and Eastern Arabia'.

¹¹⁴ Da Costa and Davids, op. cit. 141.

Africa (UUCSA), was appointed — a feat which had been attempted for many years without any success. It is important to note that the *Ahle Sunna wal Jamaat* is also part of this united body. The establishment of this council was influenced by a centripetal need to strengthen the voice of Muslims in view of their small number in South Africa and the many uncertainties of the new political dispensation under which sensitive issues like abortion, homosexuality and pornography are no longer subject to strict state censorship. On the other hand, this unified body may be perceived by the *Ahle Sunna wal Jamaat* as a new attempt to limit its power and influence.

What Islam is going to mean for Muslims in the new South Africa is now an issue for debate and action. Tradition plays an important role as a record of what was always done and believed in the past and from which the social norms of society are derived. The question is what is the authentic tradition with which to face the new South Africa.

Opposition to traditional Sufism manifested itself in three stages in South Africa: first there was cautious criticism, followed by a period of gradual intensification of conflict with Sufism, resulting in violent conflict. The final, and probably most dangerous stage, was a reinterpretation or reformation of traditional Sufism, using the terminology and structure of Sufism, but in actual fact depleting it of its original content to serve a revivalist fundamentalist approach to Islam. One may question the validity of the claims of the latter-day 'Neo-Sufism' and see it as a *de facto* annihilation of traditional Sufism. But in the new South Africa with its emphasis on the basic human right of freedom of speech, traditional Sufism has again come to the fore. The conflict is not yet resolved. The dispute has become one concerning who represents 'true Islam' and 'true Sufism'.

IV THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

PERSECUTION AND CIRCUMSPECTION IN SHAṬṬĀRĪ SUFISM

CARL W. ERNST

What happens to a Sufi order when one of its foremost leaders is persecuted and charged with heresy? This question, which may be framed with respect to a number of Sufi leaders over the course of Islamic history, has a special interest in connection with the Shaṭṭārī Sufi order. This group, which was established in the South Asian subcontinent in the late fifteenth century, had a colorful history that was closely intertwined with the political fortunes of the dynasties of northern India. Its membership spread to western India and the Deccan, and then via the Hejaz it was exported to Southeast Asia. The Shaṭṭārī order was known especially for its emphasis on meditative techniques, and this gave it a characteristic style. Most Sufi orders defined themselves by initiatic lineages that went through al-Junayd, the Baghdadian master of “sober” Sufism. In contrast, the Shaṭṭārīs derived their authority from chains of transmission that went to the Khorasanian ecstatic, Abū Yazīd al-Baṣṭamī. The extent and impact of the Shaṭṭārī order has not yet been adequately assessed; most of the texts that detail the history of the order are unpublished.¹ Little scholarly work has been directed to this topic; a few articles written several decades ago focused on Shaṭṭārī activity in northern India, and some work has also been done on Shaṭṭārīs in the Deccan.² A

¹ An exception is the Arabic translation of the Persian meditation manual by Muḥammad b. Khaṭīr al-Dīn b. Khwāja al-ʿAṭṭār (Muḥammad Ghawth), *al-Jawāhir al-khams*, ed. Aḥmad b. al-ʿAbbās, i-ii (Cairo 2nd ed. 1393/1973).

² See Khaliq Ahmed Nizami, ‘The Shattari Saints and Their Attitude towards the State’, *Medieval India Quarterly* iii (1950), 56-70; Syed Hasan Askari, ‘A Fifteenth Century Shuttari Sufi Saint of North Bihar’, *Proceedings of the 13th Indian History Congress* (1950) 148-57; M.M. Haq, ‘The Shuttari Order of Sufism in India and Its Exponents in Bengal and Bihar’,

single dissertation, written in Aligarh in 1963, has attempted a reconstruction of the history of the Shaṭṭārīs.³ Biographical sources for the Shaṭṭārīs are relatively abundant, however, and so an initial effort can be made here to analyze their reaction to the problem of persecution.⁴

The material used for this study suggests that persecution of the Shaṭṭārī leader Muḥammad Ghawth was based upon ecstatic statements that he made regarding his spiritual status. As in other cases of this kind, going back to the trial of al-Ḥallāj, the exact circumstances of the persecution are hedged around with hagiographical interpretations that make it hard to evaluate precisely, although it is clear that political considerations are always relevant in cases of religious persecution.⁵ Also comparable to the case of al-Ḥallāj is the encouragement of a climate of circumspection in the wake of persecution. Conspicuous conformity with sharia-based norms of behavior characterized Shaṭṭārī activity in the generations following upon Muḥammad Ghawth, just as it did for tenth-century Sufis after the execution of al-Ḥallāj. Perhaps because multiple initiation into different Sufi orders was a norm from an early period for Shaṭṭārī mas-

Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan xvi (1971) 167-75; Richard M. Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur 1300-1700: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India* (Princeton University Press 1978); Muhammad Yousuf Kokan, *Arabic and Persian in the Carnatic 1710- 1969* (Madras 1974); id., 'Sufi Presence in South India', in Christian W. Troll (ed.), *Islam in India: Studies and Commentaries*, vol. II: *Religion and Religious Education* (Delhi 1985) 73-85; Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, i-ii (New Delhi 1983) ii, 151- 73.

³ Qazi Moinuddin Ahmad, 'History of the Shattari Silsilah' (Ph.D. Diss., Aligarh 1963). Regrettably, many of the manuscripts listed in this study are no longer in existence.

⁴ The sources include a biography of Muḥammad Ghawth by Faḍl Allāh Shaṭṭārī, *Manāqib-i Ghawthiyya*, Urdu trans. Muḥammad Ṣāḥir al-Ḥaqq (Agra 1933). This rare lithograph, consulted at the University of the Punjab in Lahore, has been translated from a Persian MS in the *khānqāh* of Shaykh Wajih al-Dīn 'Alawī in Ahmedabad, which apparently covered the life of Muḥammad Ghawth up to 941/1534-35, the remainder being added by the translator on the basis of "well-known books" (p. 80). A standard hagiography of the Mughal period with considerable material on the Shaṭṭārīs is Muḥammad Ghawthī Mandawī, *Adhkār-i abrār*, Urdu *tarjuma-i gulzār-i abrār*, trans. Faḍl Aḥmad Jēwarī (Agra 1326/1908; reprint ed. Lahore 1395/1975); the original Persian text has never been printed, and I cite to it according to the Urdu translation except for a few sections for which I had access to manuscripts. Another source that is indispensable for this topic is the detailed modern hagiography by Sayyid Muḥammad Muṭī^c Allāh Rāshid Burhānpūri, *Burhānpūr kē Sindhī awliyā^c, al-ma^crūf ba-tadhkira-i awliyā-yi Sindh* (Karachi 1957). For later Shaṭṭārīs in Arabia, see F. Wüstenfeld, 'Die Ḥafīten in Süd-Arabien im XI. (XVII.) Jahrhundert', *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaftern zu Göttingen*, Philologisch-historische Klasse 30/1 (1883).

⁵ See my *Words of Ecstasy in Sufism* (Albany 1985), and my 'From Hagiography to Martyrology: Conflicting Testimonies to a Sufi Martyr of the Delhi Sultanate', *History of Religions* xxiv (1985) 308-27.

ters, the criticism of Muḥammad Ghawth encouraged them to maintain, at least publicly, a more conservative profile that might be viewed as “the Qādirī option”. This kind of self-censorship reached its apparent limit in the case of the Shaṭṭārī master Burhān al-Dīn Rāz-i Ilāhī. He is said to have turned some disciples over to a sharia court for execution, because they ecstatically identified their master as God. Subsequently we look in vain for any Shaṭṭārī Sufis who emulate publicly the ecstatic claims of Muḥammad Ghawth. In this case, persecution may have actually succeeded in suppressing the most extravagant claims of ecstatic Sufism.

Shaykh Muḥammad Ghawth Gwāliyārī is believed to have been born 7 Rajab 907/16 January 1502, and he died on 14 Ramaḍān 970/7 May 1563.⁶ In his youth, he spent about thirteen years meditating and practising asceticism in the lonely fortress of Chunar (now in eastern U.P.). He witnessed the conquest of the great fort of Gwalior by Sultan Ibrāhīm Lōdī (probably around 925/1520), after he had been advised in a vision to move to that location.⁷ Although he was approached with gifts by Ibrāhīm Lōdī, Muḥammad Ghawth was critical of the sultan because the latter had imprisoned a number of powerful nobles, and friendship between the two became impossible; the result of the saint’s displeasure was that the Mughals defeated the Lōdī forces at Panipat in 932/1526.⁸ That same year Muḥammad Ghawth, who was living in Gwalior, interceded with the emperor Bābur on behalf of Tātār Khān, the rebellious governor of Gwalior.⁹ Further dealings with the Mughals on the part of Muḥammad Ghawth included pleading the case of another rebellious noble, Raḥīm Dād, in 936/1530.¹⁰ In another case the following year, the saint cursed a rebel named Bāyazīd the Afghan, who had devastated a nearby town, and within a few days the malefactor was executed by Bābur.¹¹ Muḥammad Ghawth’s elder brother Shaykh P’hūl (or Bahlūl), another Shaṭṭārī master, became the chief Sufi adviser to

⁶ Faḍl Allāh 76.

⁷ Faḍl Allāh 33; Khwāja Nizām al-Dīn Aḥmad, *The Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī*, trans. B. De, *Bibliotheca Indica*, 300 (Calcutta 1911; reprint 1973) i, 401-2.

⁸ Faḍl Allāh 40-41, 44.

⁹ Faḍl Allāh 42, 58-61; this is far more circumstantial than the laconic account in Ṣāḥirū’-d-dīn Muḥammad Bābur Pādshāh Ghāzī, *Bābur-nāma (Memoirs of Babur)*, trans. Annette Susannah Beveridge [New Delhi 1979 (1922)] 539-40.

¹⁰ Bābur 688 n. 2, 690.

¹¹ Faḍl Allāh 43; Bābur 677.

Bābur's successor Humāyūn at this time. So closely intertwined did P'hūl become in politics that he lost his life in the service of Humāyūn, when he was executed in Bengal by the rebellious Mīrzā Hindāl. With such close relations to the Mughals, it is not surprising to learn that Humāyūn's defeat by Shēr Shāh Sūrī in 947/1540 led to problems for Muḥammad Ghawth, resulting in his departure for Gujarat that same year. His exile in Gujarat would last over sixteen years, until the restoration of Humāyūn.¹²

Hagiographers indicate that the first hint of persecution had arisen on the part of advisers to Shēr Shāh.¹³ A disciple named ʿAlī Shēr Bangālī simply observed that Muḥammad Ghawth 'had seen the internal evil of the Sūr Afghans'.¹⁴ A later hagiographer, ʿAbd Allāh Khwīshagī, writing in 1096/1685, specified that Shēr Shāh's advisers had objected to a treatise in which Muḥammad Ghawth described his ascension (*miʿrāj*) into heaven, along the lines of the famous ascension of Abū Yazīd al-Baṣṭāmī; the audacious claims that the shaykh made about his encounters with God and numerous prophets and saints were apparently viewed as serious enough to deserve capital punishment.¹⁵ Although here and elsewhere the offending treatise is called simply *Risāla-i miʿrājiyya*, the correct title is *Awṛād-i ghawthiyya*, and it is available in two manuscripts in Calcutta.¹⁶ While much of the text is devoted to explaining the characteristic Shaṭṭārī meditation techniques, and the initiatic genealogies in which the author was confirmed, the lengthy closing portion indeed contains a remarkable account of the spiritual training of Muḥammad Ghawth by his master Shaykh Ṣuhūr Ḥājji Ḥuḍūr, culminating in a detailed description of his ascension experience.¹⁷ We do not know precisely what actions the Sūrī regime took against the shaykh, but his prudent departure for Gujarat temporarily put him out of danger.

The second phase of the persecution of Muḥammad Ghawth began after his arrival in the kingdom of Gujarat. When he reached the city

¹² Faḍl Allāh 66, states that the exile was 18 years. He also notes that Muḥammad Ghawth built a mosque in Ahmedabad dated 963/1556.

¹³ Faḍl Allāh 65.

¹⁴ Ghawthī 309.

¹⁵ Rizvi ii, 157-58, quoting ʿAbd Allāh Khwīshagī Qaṣūri, *Maʿārij al-wilayat*, MS Adhar collection, Punjab University Library, fol. 543a. For Khwīshagī and his hagiography, see Muḥammad Iqbāl Mujaddidī, *Aḥwāl-ō āthār-i ʿAbd Allāh Khwīshagī Qaṣūri* (Lahore 1391/1972) 80 ff.

¹⁶ Muḥammad Ghawth, *Awṛād-i ghawthiyya*, MS 446 Curzon Persian, and MS 1252 Persian, both in the Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

¹⁷ *Awṛād-i ghawthiyya*, MS 1252, fols. 107-30.

of Ahmedabad, problems began. The scene was described in vague though dramatic terms by his disciple ʿAlī Shēr Bangālī:

‘Here some short-sighted scholars and ignorant dervishes began to search for an excuse for their enmity toward him. By linking him with expressions they neither knew nor understood, they only succeeded by this means in making his pure and luminous heart more illuminated. Staying in that place was unpleasant for him. On a certain occasion good tidings came from heaven, that the reason for emigration [to Gujarat] has vanished, and the occasion for opposition has arisen. Hearing this, he departed for Gwalior’.¹⁸

A modern hagiographer, the editor of Faḍl Allāh, is somewhat more circumstantial:

‘During the time of his stay in Gujarat, certain incidents took place, the story of which event has, like it or not, apparently been well told. The reason for this can be described as follows. He had expressed himself with ecstatic sayings (*shaḥīyyāt*), that is, spiritual realities in the style of his lofty imagination, in extremely clear words. The understanding of these was considerably beyond the masses, and beginning with those ignorant folk, such a quantity of hostility was generated that the religious scholars, the learned, and even the sultan of the age were necessarily included’.¹⁹

Both of these accounts fall into the vagueness of stock hagiographical narrative; all that they do is to connect Muḥammad Ghawth with unknown accusers and to portray him as a model mystic. Ghawthī reports that some of the local scholars became opposed to Muḥammad Ghawth, leading one of them to send his son to spy on the shaykh:

‘Since the short-sighted people of Gujarat were infatuated with his reputation, therefore through envy and lack of insight they began to turn against Ghawth al-Awliyā’. Among them Shaykh ‘Abd al-Muqtadir Banbānī sent his younger son confidentially into the Ghawthiyya Khānqāh with instructions to be present at all times, in order to take note of the words and deeds of Ghawth al-Awliya’ that were objectionable, and to convey those deeds to his superiors for their consideration. It is said that this spy one day said [to Muḥammad Ghawth]: ‘This least of disciples has been hopeful of instruction for some time’. The answer came [from the shaykh], ‘The goal of wayfaring is advancement. God willing, you can work in the faqīrs’ kitchen; this will produce the influence of instruction’. Finally, after a few days, a strong attraction overcame him, and his eyes saw reality, so that in all states and in all stations he repeated this phrase continually: ‘When this is the state of the hypocrite, what do you say to the person who lays his secret at the threshold of this perfect saint?’²⁰

Thus the saint’s spiritual power foiled this underhanded attempt to undermine his position, as the would-be spy became a disciple.

¹⁸ Ghawthī 309.

¹⁹ Faḍl Allāh 65.

²⁰ Ghawthī 288.

Muḥammad Ghawth appears to have thrived in Gujarat, and we find reference to his presence at different times in the cities of Broach (950/1543-4) and Ahmedabad (951/1544-5).²¹ One of his last actions there was to build a mosque, which is dated by a commemorative verse to 963/1556.²²

It was left for a secular chronicler, the Mughal courtier Badā'ūnī (Badā'ūnī), to give a fully detailed narrative of the controversy in Gujarat, in which Muḥammad Ghawth was accused by the notable scholar 'Alī al-Muttaqī (885-975/1480-1567). In this controversy the shaykh was defended by another scholar, Wajīh al-Dīn 'Alawī, who in the course of the dispute ended by becoming a Shaṭṭārī disciple.

'When Shaykh Muḥammad Ghawth went from Hindustan to Gujarat, in the reign of Sultan Maḥmūd of Gujarat, Shaykh 'Alī al-Muttaqī, one of the greatest Shaykhs, most influential religious leaders and greatest sages of that time, wrote a fatwa for the execution of Shaykh Muḥammad Ghawth, and the Sultan abrogated it at the instance of Miṣṣan Wajīh al-Dīn. When Miṣṣan Wajīh al-Dīn went on the first occasion to the Shaykh's house he was powerfully attracted by his face, and tore up the fatwa, and Shaykh 'Alī came, beside himself (with rage), to the Miṣṣan's house, and rent his clothes and said: "Why do you assent to the spread of heresy, and to a schism in the faith?" He answered: "We follow the letter and the Shaykh the spirit. Our understanding cannot reach his perfections and (even), as far as the letter of the law goes, no exception, by which he could be pronounced blameworthy, can be taken to him." And this was the cause of the great faith which the Sultans and rulers of Gujarat had in Shaykh Muḥammad Ghawth, and of his deliverance from that position of peril. (The Miṣṣan) from that time repeatedly said in assemblies, "One ought to obey the letter of the law after the manner of Shaykh 'Alī al-Muttaqī, and the spirit after the manner of my spiritual guide" (i.e., Shaykh Muḥammad Ghawth).²³

In this version, we are not told what was the precise cause of 'Alī al-Muttaqī's wrath, but a new dramatic twist is furnished by Wajīh al-Dīn 'Alawī's decision to become a follower of Muḥammad Ghawth. In other respects this narrative echoes other famous persecutions from Sufi hagiography, such as the abstention of Ibn Surayj

²¹ Ghawthī 362, 427.

²² Faḍl Allāh 66.

²³ 'Abdu-'l-Qādir ibn-i-Mulūkshāh al-Badā'ūnī, *Muntakhabu-'t-tawārīkh*, trans. Wolseley Haig (Calcutta 1898-1925) iii, 71-72 (text, iii, 44), with slight spelling changes. This account, from the article devoted to Wajīh al-Dīn 'Alawī, contrasts with the absence of any mention of persecution in the separate notice given by Badā'ūnī to Muḥammad Ghawth: 'After the rebellion in India, when Shēr Shāh began to oppress Shaykh Muḥammad, he betook himself to Gujarat where also he brought princes and rulers under the yoke of subjection to him and belief in his teaching, so that all alike were ready to do him service' (ibid. iii, 8; text, iii, 5).

from judging the case of al-Hallāj, or Farīd al-Dīn-i ʿAttār's mythical portrait of al-Junayd's response to the final trial of al-Hallāj.²⁴ A later Shattārī text, ʿĀqil Khān Rāzī's *Thamarāt al-ḥayāt* (1053/1643-4) also relates another incident, in which ʿAlī al-Muttaqī while in Ahmedabad suspiciously inquired about a copy of Ibn ʿArabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* that was being read by Shaykh Lashkar Muḥammad ʿĀrif, a disciple of Muḥammad Ghawth. When Shaykh Lashkar briefly responded with the essence of Ibn ʿArabī's teaching on the divine unity, ʿAlī al-Muttaqī was satisfied with his answer, and he respectfully told his own disciples that this kind of man was worthy of the knowledge of divine realities.²⁵

A question arises, however, concerning ʿAlī al-Muttaqī's participation in this inquisition. He had been favored with the attention of the sultan of Gujarat, Bahādur Shāh (r. 932-43/1526-37), though he was reluctant to accept gifts from the latter. Some of ʿAlī al-Muttaqī's biographers report that he departed from Gujarat when Humāyūn's armies first began their invasions of that territory in 941/1534, and that after his arrival in the Hijaz, he remained there for the next thirty years.²⁶ Others say that he left India for Arabia later on, in 953/1546-7.²⁷ The curious thing is that only Badāʾonī refers to ʿAlī al-Muttaqī's role in the affair. ʿAlī al-Muttaqī's principal biographer, ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith, does not seem to mention ʿAlī al-Muttaqī in connection with the persecution of Muḥammad Ghawth, either in the brief notice devoted to ʿAlī al-Muttaqī in the comprehensive dictionary of saints, *Akhbār al-akhyār*, or in the monographic biography of ʿAlī al-Muttaqī and his successor ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Muttaqī, *Zād al-muttaqīn*.²⁸ A history of Gujarat completed in 1022/1613, the *Mirʾāt-i Sikandarī*, simply lists the names of ʿAlī al-Muttaqī and Muḥammad Ghawth together, as famous religious figures of the reign of Sultan Maḥmūd (r. 943-61/1537-54), without indicating that there was any conflict between the two.²⁹ Ghawthī mentions the participation of Wajih al-Dīn ʿAlawī and

²⁴ See *Words of Ecstasy* 102-3, 131.

²⁵ ʿĀqil Khān Rāzī, *Thamarāt al-ḥayāt*, MS 1278 Persian, ASB, Calcutta, fols. 61b-62a.

²⁶ See EI vii, 800-1 s.v. *al-Muttaqī al-Hindī*.

²⁷ Ghawthī 402.

²⁸ ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dihlawī al-Bukhārī, *Akhbār al-akhyār fī asrār al-abrār*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Aḥad (Delhi 1332/1913-4) 257-69; the unpublished *Zād al-muttaqīn* is summarized by Rizvi ii, 319- 27.

²⁹ Edward Clive Bayley, *The History of India as told by its own Historians: The Local Muhammadan Dynasties—Gujarat*, ed. Nagendra Singh (New Delhi reprint ed. 1970) 441.

Ḥamīd Lār in defending Muḥammad Ghawth with “answers both traditional and rational”, but he fails to name any of the shaykh’s persecutors.³⁰ °Alī al-Muttaqī is said to have returned temporarily to Gujarat during the reign of Maḥmūd, which would have enabled him to confront Muḥammad Ghawth.³¹ From an *ijāza* document signed by °Alī al-Muttaqī it is established that he was back in Mecca by 961/1554, so the incident of persecution would have to have taken place by then.³² We can compare °Abd al-Ḥaqq’s reticence on this subject to his reluctance to discuss the martyrdom of the early Chishtī Sufi Mas°ūd Bakk, a subject that was broached more openly by °Abd al-Ḥaqq’s disciple Muḥammad Ṣādiq.³³ °Abd al-Ḥaqq’s discreet silence can probably best be explained in terms of his strategy as a hagiographer interested in emphasizing *shar°i* norms.

In any case, after the years of exile in Gujarat, Muḥammad Ghawth finally returned to northern India after 963/1556, when Humāyūn briefly reasserted his authority, and Akbar was crowned emperor after Humāyūn’s untimely death.³⁴ Muḥammad Ghawth was received with general acclaim in Delhi and Agra. When he approached Akbar for an interview in 966/1558-9 in Agra, according to Badā°onī, he immediately aroused the enmity of the chief *ṣadr* (official in charge of charitable trusts), a Suhrawardī Sufi named Shaykh Gadā°ī. Badā°onī interpreted this enmity as entirely based on Shaykh Gadā°ī’s professional jealousy. In any case, this set the stage for the third phase of persecution of the Shaṭṭārī master. Due to Shaykh Gadā°ī’s promptings, the regent Bayram Khān introduced in court with ridicule the claims Muḥammad Ghawth had made about his ascension, once again evidently in allusion to *Awrād-i ghawthiyya*.³⁵ The shaykh retired in some discomfiture to Gwalior, which had recently been reconquered by the Mughals from Shēr

³⁰ Ghawthī 345.

³¹ Rizvi ii, 321.

³² °Alī al-Muttaqī, Arabic *ijāzat-nāma* in Shādhiliyya, Madyaniyya, and Qādiriyya orders; MS 52 Arabic, acc. no. 239, Jamia Millia Islamiyya, New Delhi, fol. 247a, dated 18 Sha°ban 961/19 July 1554 in Mecca.

³³ See my ‘From Hagiography to Martyrology’ for details.

³⁴ Ghawthī 298, says this occurred in 963/1556; Badā°onī (trans., iii, 8; text, iii, 5) says that Muḥammad Ghawth’s departure from Gujarat for Agra occurred in 966/1558-9, and that he witnessed the shaykh riding amid a great throng of people in Agra’s bazar. This roughly agrees with the statement of Faḍl Allāh (p. 66), that Muḥammad Ghawth spent eighteen years in Gujarat.

³⁵ Badā°onī ii, 28-29 (trans.), ii, 34-35 (text); Sukumar Ray, *Bairam Khan*, ed. M.H.A. Beg (Karachi 1992) 175-77.

Shāh's forces. He could be comforted, however, by the immense revenues that had been designated for his support, doubtless with the approval of Akbar.³⁶ Muḥammad Ghawth had a final meeting with Akbar when the latter came hunting in the region of Gwalior, and had his curiosity aroused by tales of the fine cattle kept by the shaykh. At this meeting, Muḥammad Ghawth took the hand of the young king in the ritual of Sufi initiation, offering to become his spiritual guide. Akbar treated this as a joke, however, and his minister Abū'l-Faḍl regarded the shaykh and his pretensions with scorn.³⁷ Muḥammad Ghawth remained in Gwalior, training disciples in Shattārī exercises, until his death in 970/1563.

From the details summarized above, several points emerge with considerable force. First, although some accounts are vague about what actually aroused the opposition to Muḥammad Ghawth, his ascension experience has been cited as the text that scholars regarded with suspicion in all three reported instances of persecution, first by the Sūrī regime, then by the sultan of Gujarat, and later by the regent of Akbar. Second, in all these cases the fortunes of Muḥammad Ghawth were dependent on his close personal relationship with the Mughal rulers; all commentators, whether friendly or hostile to the shaykh, agree that he had an extraordinary influence over many political figures. His persecution by Shēr Shāh is clearly understandable as directed against a Mughal supporter, while his principal accuser in Gujarat, °Alī al-Muttaqī, had been allied with a Gujarati sultan opposed to the Mughals. In the last instance, it appears that Akbar's good-natured regard for the brother of one of his father's spiritual advisers saved Muḥammad Ghawth from the hostility of Shaykh Gadā'ī and Bayram Khān. Third, while Muḥammad Ghawth was threatened in all these instances, he was an extremely influential and powerful man, and he emerged unscathed from the attempts of his opponents. His brother Shaykh P'hūl only lost his life because he fell afoul of a purely political quarrel. Fourth, the persecution of Muḥammad Ghawth was an unusual event, in that none of the rulers or scholars who opposed the Shattārī master was opposed to Sufism in principle. The Sūrīs, the Gujarati sultans, and the Mughals were all generous patrons of Sufism. Muḥammad Ghawth's critic °Alī al-Muttaqī had in his childhood been initiated into the Chishtī order,

³⁶ Badā'ūnī (ibid.) estimates the shaykh's income at 100,000 rupees, a huge sum.

³⁷ *The Akbar Nama of Abu'l-Fazl*, trans. H. Beveridge (Delhi 1977) ii, 133-35 (text ii, 88-89).

and later on while studying *ḥadīth* in Arabia he had also been initiated into the Qādirī, Shādhilī, and Madyanī orders. Nor was ʿAlī al-Muttaqī hostile to ecstatic Sufism on principle. Through his Chishtī master Bahāʾ al-Dīn Shāh Bājan, ʿAlī al-Muttaqī had a connection with the Chishtī martyr Masʿūd Bakk, whose writings he frequently quoted, even translating one work by Masʿūd Bakk from Persian into Arabic.³⁸ He thus can hardly be characterized as an opponent of Sufism, although he was a spirited critic of the Mahdawī movement. Thus, if we wish to understand the “anti-Sufi” issue in the case of Muḥammad Ghawth, it must be sought in his ascension narrative, which will be discussed further below. For the moment, let me suggest that the kernel of unacceptable statement lies in the claims of Muḥammad Ghawth to have gone even beyond the level of Abū Yazīd Basṭāmī.

We search in vain for any immediate effects of the persecution upon Muḥammad Ghawth himself, in terms of any kind of alteration of his teachings. When Humāyūn wrote to express his concern about the troubles Muḥammad Ghawth was undergoing as an exile, the shaykh shrugged them off as unimportant in his reply.³⁹ Although Muḥammad Ghawth revised his meditation handbook *Jawāhir-i khams* at the request of his disciples in 956/1549, correcting all known copies in the process, this appears to have been unrelated to any external political concern.⁴⁰ Khwīshagī suggested that the initial persecution (under the Sūrī regime) was aimed at the ascension narrative in *Awrad-i ghawthiyya*, and he further maintained that Muḥammad Ghawth later adopted a conciliatory stance regarding this controversial text, which he clarified by saying that his ascension was only in spirit and not bodily like that of the Prophet.⁴¹ In what

³⁸ See the biography of ʿAlī al-Muttaqī in ʿAbd al-Ḥayy b. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-khawātir wa-bahjat al-masāmiʿ waʾl-nawāzīm*, viii vols. (Hyderabad 2nd ed. 1386/1966-) iv, 234-44. ʿAlī al-Muttaqī quotes Masʿūd Bakk in his *Jawāmiʿ al-kalīm fīʾl-mawāʿiẓ waʾl-ḥikam*, also known as *al-Jawāhir al-thamīna*, a miscellany with quotations from Anṣārī, Saʿdī, Husaynī Sādāt, Masʿūd Bakk, and others; cf. MS 1254 Persian, Asiatic Society, Calcutta. ʿAlī al-Muttaqī translated the *Minhāj al-ʿarifīn* [i.e., *Mirʾāt al-ʿarifīn*] of Malik-zāda Masʿūd [Bakk] into Arabic under the title *al-Naṣḥ al-wāfi liʾl-qalb al-shāfi*, MS Punjab University, Lahore, Sherani 3923/871/6, cat. ii, 262, no. 1452.

³⁹ Ghawthī 292-94.

⁴⁰ Some have suggested (Haq 174; Nizami 59) that the *Jawāhir-i khams* came in for severe criticism by religious scholars, but this appears to be a confusion with *Awrad-i ghawthiyya*.

⁴¹ Khwīshagī, *Maʿārij al-wilāyat*, fol. 553b, in Rizvi ii, 158.

appears to be a version of the same story, Ghulām Sarwar (who often cites Khwīshagī) in 1280/1864-5 wrote that Wajih al-Dīn °Alawī advised Muḥammad Ghawth to take a variable position, according to whether the scholars were against him or not; if they supported him, he should maintain that his ascension veritably occurred during wakefulness, but if they opposed him, he should say that it took place during a dream.⁴² Against this view suggesting a *taqiyya*-like dissimulation, we may note the observation found in one source that Muḥammad Ghawth wrote *Awrad-i ghawthiyya* at age forty-three, three years after his arrival in Gujarat; in that case, the problems that the shaykh had with Shēr Shāh had nothing to do with the ascension treatise. If this is correct, it suggests that the report of Khwīshagī about the Sūrī persecution of Muḥammad Ghawth may have erroneously read back the controversy over *Awrad-i ghawthiyya* into an earlier, purely political persecution.⁴³

Nonetheless, among the successors of Muḥammad Ghawth, a distinctly conservative sharia-oriented pattern became the norm. While most early Shaṭṭārī writings by Muḥammad Ghawth and his contemporaries are collections of esoteric meditation practices, later Shaṭṭārī Sufis, particularly those located in the city of Burhanpur, increasingly focused on obligatory sharia worship and Koranic and ḥadīth studies. This conservative trend was already evident in Wajih al-Dīn °Alawī (1504-1589), the jurist who preserved Muḥammad Ghawth from persecution in Gujarat and then became his disciple. Wajih al-Dīn's Sufi writings learnedly expound Sufi metaphysics in contrast to Ash'arī theology, but he pointedly avoids or mutes controversial topics in these discussions. For example, his mystical treatise *al-Ḥaqīqa al-muḥammadiyya* makes an ingenious distinction between the legislative and gnostic aspects of prophecy, but Wajih al-Dīn is quick to assert that prophecy is always superior to sainthood, thus avoiding any heretical suggestion that would denigrate the Prophet. One of his sources for this doctrine, interestingly enough, is Bāyazīd Bastāmī, to whom the name of Ibn °Arabī is also joined.⁴⁴ Making the point about the superiority of prophecy establishes his conservative credentials, while at the same time he marks the centrality of the saint (Bāyazīd) who is the pivotal figure

⁴² Ghulām Sarwar, *Khazīnat al-asfiyā'* 333-34.

⁴³ Faḍl Allāh 76.

⁴⁴ Wajih al-Dīn °Alawī, *al-Risāla al-musammāt bi'l-Ḥaqīqa al-muḥammadiyya*, ed. with Urdu trans. Muḥammad Zubayr Ghulām Nabī Qurayshī (Ahmadabad 1385/1966) 29-30.

in the standard Shaṭṭārī lineage. It should be recalled that Bāyazīd's ecstatic sayings that seemed to infringe on the status of the Prophet had previously been sanitized by popularizers of Sufism such as ʿAṭṭār.

The contrast between Muḥammad Ghawth and his more conservative disciples may be seen in an incident that took place when he met Ṭāhir Muḥammad Muḥaddith, a pious scholar who later became a devoted disciple. 'His glass is so pure and fine', remarked the shaykh. 'How wonderful it would be to fill it with wine!' This scandalized the scholar, who was not yet accustomed to hearing Sufis use the name of "the mother of iniquities", though he eventually got used to it.⁴⁵ After spending some time in Berar, Ṭāhir Muḥammad (d. 1004/1595-6) settled in Burhanpur in 982/1574-5, where he composed works based on the classical Sufi writings of al-Qushayrī, Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, and al-Ghazālī, along with digests and indices of works on ḥadīth.⁴⁶ Only one of his writings hints at ecstatic sayings; his *Riyāḍ al-ṣāliḥīn* contains three sections: the first contains explanations of ḥadīth, the second comments on the sayings of Sufi masters (including ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, al-Ghazālī, Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī, and, curiously enough, ʿAlī al-Muttaqī), and the third deals with the expressions and allusions of "the masters of unification and ecstasy, the people of love and gnosis" (such as Ibn ʿArabī, ʿAyn al-Quḍāt-i Hamadānī, Ṣadr al-Dīn-i Qūnawī, "and other followers of *waḥdat al-wujūd*").⁴⁷ Although the last section appears to be potentially controversial, it becomes clear from comparison with other Shaṭṭārī works that articulation of the *wujūdī* metaphysics associated with Ibn ʿArabī was standard among nearly all Shaṭṭārī authors. Evidently, in India the views of Ibn ʿArabī were not regarded as problematic at this time.

Another disciple of Muḥammad Ghawth was Lashkar Muḥammad ʿĀrif (d. 993/1585), who came from a warrior clan; he guided Sufis for many years in Ahmedabad before coming to Burhanpur at the end of his life. Shaykh Lashkar exhibited a degree of piety toward the Prophet Muḥammad that was remarkable. He stated that it is easy to reach God, but quite difficult to reach the level of the Prophet. The reason is that one must attain the most perfect of all attributes to

⁴⁵ Rāshid 5-6, citing *Kashf al-ḥaqāʾiq*, fol. 3.

⁴⁶ Ghawthī 426-33, enumerating eight writings, with a long excerpt from a Qushayrī-style *tafsīr* on pp. 427-32.

⁴⁷ Ghawthī 433.

come close to the Prophet, but God manifests in all degrees of creation and is therefore more easily accessible.⁴⁸ Shaykh Lashkar was the subject of a lengthy debate among his followers, concerning an anecdote told by his saintly daughter Bībī Rāstī. This daughter is also known as Būbū Rāstī, and it is after her that the Burhanpur neighborhood of Rāstīpūra is named. In a gathering that took place in 1013/1605, which included several leading Sufis and the Mughal minister °Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān, she described how her father reached an indescribable state, which he later revealed was the station of Bāyazīd Baṣṭāmī.⁴⁹ It was only by God's grace, he told her once he recovered his senses, that he did not repeat the famous utterance of Bāyazīd, 'Glory be to me' (*subḥānī*). He reflected that it is better to say, 'Glory be to him' (*subḥānahu*), or some variation, to avoid the error of lèse-majesté committed by Bāyazīd. Muḥammad Ghawthī, author of *Gulzār-i abrār*, was quite cognizant of the delicacy of this situation. He himself offered a more nuanced interpretation:

'When the Sufi with the aid of annihilation in the journey of ascension removes the created garment of the body and enters the divine dress, and his goal becomes his own transcendence, then at that time there is need for interpreting and explaining his verbal utterance of "Glory be to him". And if he utters the cry of "Glory be to me", that is not improper, since that is in fact his goal. Therefore, on account of the superiority of saying "Glory be to him", both explanations apply'.⁵⁰

This tentative approval of the "Bāyazīdian rank" was first put forward by the chief disciple of Shaykh Lashkar, °Isā Jund Allāh. Using Ibn °Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ* as a model, °Isā would have taken al-Ḥallāj to a higher state than the qualification with divinity that led to his ecstatic utterance, 'I am the Real'; that higher state (reminiscent of Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī's criticism of Ibn °Arabī) was qualification with created existence.⁵¹ Both in the report of the debate over Shaykh Lashkar's Bāyazīdian temptation, and in the highly ambivalent reflections by °Isā, we can see a reluctance to approve of ecstatic states without grounding them in approved metaphysical theories.

Shaykh °Isā Jund Allāh (d. 1031/1622), a nephew of Ṭāhir Muḥammad, was generally an irenic soul. He wrote primarily on

⁴⁸ Ghawthī 362.

⁴⁹ Khān-i Khānān and his son Dārāb Khān also attended on the lectures of Bībī Rāstī on Sufi classics such as °Irāqī's *Lama'āt*; see Rāshid 51.

⁵⁰ Ghawthī 364.

⁵¹ Ibid. 365-66; this section quotes extensively from the section on Noah in Ibn °Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*.

meditation techniques employing the Arabic names of God, plus a couple of treatises commenting on the metaphysics of *waḥdat al-wujūd*.⁵² When a dispute over *ḥadīth* between religious scholars threatened to erupt into a heresy accusation, he persuaded ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān to send the heresy-hunting scholar on pilgrimage to Mecca.⁵³ Nonetheless, such was the harmonious atmosphere established by the Fārūqī kings in Burhanpur prior to the Mughal conquest that ʿĪsā like many other local Sufis supported the Fārūqīs against Akbar. But the Mughals finally succeeded in taking the Fārūqī fortress of Asīr by strategem and treason in 1010/1601. Consequently Akbar planned to exile ʿĪsā to Agra for a time, along with other dissident Sufis, on the pretext of requesting him to give spiritual instruction to the army; fortunately, the prayers of the shaykh were answered and he did not have to suffer this ordeal for long.⁵⁴ This seems to have been a fairly mild persecution, if we can call it that, and it was a political affair unrelated to Sufism per se.

The trend toward greater *sharʿi* conservatism continued with Shaykh ʿĪsā's children. ʿĪsā's son Bābā Faṭḥ Muḥammad Muḥaddith is known primarily for his devotional writings on ritual prayer. When ʿĪsā's future successor in Burhanpur, Burhān al-Dīn Rāz-i Ilāhī, came to ʿĪsā seeking instruction, he was offered two choices: a letter of introduction to the *ṣadr* if he sought money and land, or study with Faṭḥ Muḥammad if he sought religious learning; since Rāz-i Ilāhī sought knowledge of the names of God, he remained with ʿĪsā.⁵⁵ Faṭḥ Muḥammad wrote over a dozen treatises on ritual prayer and meditation, along with some short summaries of *waḥdat al-wujūd* in the form of creeds. He also wrote on the determination of the correct direction of Mecca from Burhanpur, for purposes of ritual prayer.⁵⁶ These are only a few examples of the later Shaṭṭārī order after Muḥammad Ghawth. Richard Eaton has remarked with reference to Wajih al-Dīn ʿAlawī and his disciple Sibghat Allāh (the translator of the *Jawāhir-i khams* into Arabic), that these later Shaṭṭārīs exhibit the characteristics of the "scholastic" and the "puri-

⁵² Rāshid 63-73, provides a list of works, and includes a short treatise entitled *Risāla-i daqīqa* on pp. 74-80.

⁵³ Rāshid 45-46.

⁵⁴ Rāshid 55-57, 106-7. On the report of ʿĪsā's disciple and *malfūzāt* recorder Farḥī, these dissident Sufis were put under the authority of Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī's successor, Mīr Muḥammad Nuʿmān Naqshbandī.

⁵⁵ Rāshid 41, citing *Rawāʿiḥ al-anfās* 13.

⁵⁶ Rāshid 70, 118-42, with a short *mathnawī* poem presented on pp. 143-50.

tanical reformist” rather than the extravagant ecstatic.⁵⁷ While these terms may have to be modified to some extent when it is possible to give a fuller account of the teachings of these Sufis, the basic contrast seems to be correct.

Does this move to *sharʿī* conservatism constitute a response to persecution? Evidence drawn from the life of Burhān al-Dīn Rāz-i Ilāhī (d. 1083/1673) suggests that this was in fact the case. This shaykh was drawn into the succession struggle between two claimants to the Mughal throne, Dārā Shikūh and Awrangzīb. Rāz-i Ilāhī was by temperament a strict ascetic, and a conservative scholar. He was also opposed to performance of flute music if it led to dancing.⁵⁸ His writings consist of a credal commentary (*Sharḥ-i amantu bi'llāh*), a testament, and several collections of discourses recorded by disciples. He was very reluctant to form any connection with members of the court. When the noble Shāyista Khān once joined the shaykh at Friday prayers, Rāz-i Ilāhī retired afterward to perform his prayers over again, remarking to a disciple that the presence of a noble (*amīr*) in effect made his prayers nugatory.⁵⁹ So when Awrangzīb came to the retreat of Rāz-i Ilāhī disguised as an ordinary person, accompanied by the legal scholar Shaykh Nizām (compiler of the legal work *al-Fatāwā al-ʿAlamgīriyya*), Rāz-i Ilāhī was reluctant to acknowledge him in any way. There are two conflicting accounts of the outcome of this meeting. According to the historian Khwāfī Khān, Awrangzīb requested the aid of the saint in his struggle against Dārā Shikūh, on the grounds that the latter had said that Islam was the same as infidelity (*kufṛ*). In this version, Rāz-i Ilāhī gave the prince a blessing, and Shaykh Nizām predicted victory for Awrangzīb. Another historian, Maʿmūrī, reports instead that the shaykh refused to become a partisan in the succession dispute.⁶⁰ One is tempted to speculate that Khwāfī Khān stretched the story to fit a royal historiography. In any case, if Rāz-i Ilāhī was approached by Awrangzīb to take sides on an ostensibly religious issue, it may well have sensitized him to the problems of persecution. The most striking example of his conservatism occurred when one of his disciples, Shaykh Nūr Ramz-i Ilāhī, began to shout aloud the phrase, ‘Burhān is God Most Great’, and others joined in the chant. According to

⁵⁷ Richard M. Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur* 60, 206.

⁵⁸ Rāshid 322-23.

⁵⁹ Rāshid 296.

⁶⁰ Anees Jahan Syed, *Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-al Lubab* (Bombay 1977) 83 with note 11.

Khawāfi Khān, the shaykh warned the disciples to desist, and when they continued, he handed them over to the qadi for execution.⁶¹ This would indeed be an internalization of the persecution initially visited upon Muḥammad Ghawth, but in this case it was much more successful than the persecution of the earlier saint. Here the spiritual status of the saint was not proclaimed by the saint himself, but by his disciples. Unlike the case of the ambiguity of Shaykh Lashkar about his own “Bāyazīdian rank,” here Rāz-i Ilāhī rejected outright the suggestion of his disciples that he was identical with God. A verse by the shaykh seems to recall this incident: ‘Burhan is the proof of God, yet he is nothing but an intercessor of the beloved; I saw that the master is the outer form of God, and God is his inner form’.⁶² Local narrative sees Rāz-i Ilāhī as strictly conforming with the expectations of sanctity in his encounter with Awrangzīb. It is popularly believed in Burhanpur that the tomb of Rāz-i Ilāhī was built by order of Awrangzīb, and that the sum for the base of the tomb was taken from the emperor’s earnings from the sale of his knitted hats and copies of the Koran; since the dome, however, was to be built with funds taken from the imperial treasury, the saint rejected that donation as contrary to Islamic law, and the present dome was accordingly financed otherwise.⁶³

What is especially curious is that very little evidence survives in Shaṭṭārī writings regarding the original persecution of Muḥammad Ghawth. At one time a document describing the accusations against Muḥammad Ghawth was reported to be in the Pir Muhammad Shah library in Ahmedabad, but the current custodians have no record of it. In an extended commentary on this question, Muhammad Zubayr Qureshi remarks that there is an account of the persecution of Muḥammad Ghawth and the role of ‘Alī al-Muttaqī in a hagiography entitled *Mukhbīr al-awliyā’*, but it is not yet clear if this contains any material not already known from other sources.⁶⁴ Qureshi observes that the disciples of Muḥammad Ghawth wrote many works preserved in manuscript, ‘Yet no one refers to the encounter of

⁶¹ K. A. Nizami, ‘Sufi Movement in the Deccan’, in H.K. Sherwani and P.M. Joshi (eds.), *History of Medieval Deccan (1295-1724)*, i-ii (Hyderabad 1973-4) ii, 194, quoting *Muntakhab al-lubāb* ii, 554.

⁶² Rāshid 333.

⁶³ Rāshid 354-56.

⁶⁴ This title, ascribed to Mawdūd Lālā Chishtī, is noticed by Storey, *Persian Literature* i, 1059, no. 55, in a single Bombay MS (Mulla Firuz 14), but Qureshi knows of another copy in a Chishtī shrine in Ahmedabad.

Muḥammad Ghawth Gwālīārī [with his accusers]. They observe discreet silence. It is strange'.⁶⁵ If the suggestions made above are correct, it seems that Shaṭṭārī masters subsequent to Muḥammad Ghawth preferred to forget altogether about his persecution. It was an unpleasant episode, and they did not wish to revive it as a martyrology.

What was controversial enough to lead to the persecution of Muḥammad Ghawth? I have proposed above that it was the claim of attaining a spiritual state beyond that of Bāyazīd al-Baṣṭāmī that provoked outrage. Naturally political conditions also needed to be such that persecution of a Sufi saint was worth the trouble it might otherwise cause for a ruler. The Mughal struggles with other Indian dynasties furnished the political occasion for such persecution. A brief comparison with other cases within the Sufi tradition affords several instances where the status of Bāyazīd al-Baṣṭāmī became the standard against which mystics measured their experiences. The biographies of Rūzbihān Baqlī of Shiraz (d. 606/1209) record only a single instance of judicial doubt regarding his many striking spiritual claims. This doubt arose when a scholar found the passage in Rūzbihān's autobiographical work *Kashf al-asrār* where Rūzbihān described himself sitting on a mountain top, clinking glasses with God, and tossing roses down to the plain where Bāyazīd al-Baṣṭāmī and other Sufi saints looked on enviously. The scholar's doubts were removed, however, when Bāyazīd al-Baṣṭāmī appeared to him in a dream to confirm the truth of Rūzbihān's vision.⁶⁶ Another notable example of using Bāyazīd al-Baṣṭāmī as a mystical standard to be exceeded is Ibn ʿArabī, who viewed al-Baṣṭāmī with intense ambivalence; while he considered some of Baṣṭāmī's formulations to be evidence of a supremely advanced state, he also criticized the boasting (*fakhr*) that is inherent in ecstatic expressions (*shaṭhiyyāt*), in this way putting himself in a position superior to that of al-Baṣṭāmī.⁶⁷ To take a case slightly after the time of Muḥammad Ghawth, we may consider Aḥmad Sirhindī, who explicitly claimed a spiritual status that exceeded both Bāyazīd and Ibn ʿArabī, observing that their claims were based on improperly interpreted experiences that his

⁶⁵ Personal communication, letter dated 13 February 1995.

⁶⁶ See my study *Rūzbihān Baqlī: Mysticism and the Rhetoric of Sainthood in Persian Sufism* (London 1996).

⁶⁷ See my 'The Man without Attributes: Ibn ʿArabī's Interpretation of Abū Yazīd al-Baṣṭāmī', *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ʿArabī Society* xiii (1993) 1-18.

own teachings clarified; his critics in turn charged him with arrogance. In addition, his apparent claim to exceed the rank of Companions of the Prophet such as Abū Bakr was pretext enough to cause Sirhindī to be imprisoned by the Mughal emperor Jahāngīr.⁶⁸ The basic principle that caused offense in these claims is that the ecstatic vaults over the “horizontal” authenticity afforded by historical tradition through approved Sufi lineages. With direct access to God as its own verification, “vertical” authenticity can dispense with the validation of historical tradition. That is the ultimate challenge offered to established religion by ecstatic Sufis.

A search for other causes for the persecution of Muḥammad Ghawth fails to provide convincing alternatives. The Shaṭṭārī order, as we have seen, was very insistent on performance of normal *sharʿī* ritual, and in this respect it did not differ from most of the established Sufi orders. The philosophy of Ibn ʿArabī, though perhaps restricted to circles of capable students, was retained as the basic theoretical framework for mystical Islam by nearly all the Shaṭṭārī masters.

Some may suggest that the interest of Muḥammad Ghawth in yoga was controversial, since he is known to have translated the Arabic version of a *haṭha yoga* treatise into Persian under the title *Baḥr al-ḥayāt*. There is, however, no evidence to suggest that anyone made objections to yogic practice on religious grounds during the lifetime of Muḥammad Ghawth. The net effect of the yogic practices discussed in Shaṭṭārī texts had little relevance to any Hindu theology. The disciples of Muḥammad Ghawth were agreed that his treatment of yogic disciplines had basically Islamicized them.⁶⁹ Succeeding generations of Shaṭṭārīs continued developing specialized meditations that owed little to any integral yogic tradition. In the recollections of Rāz-i Ilāhī, there remains little residue of the intense interest in yoga characteristic of Muḥammad Ghawth. The only incident that Rāz-i Ilāhī relates concerning yoga is a story in which Muḥammad Ghawth was bitten on the thigh by a snake; such was the saint’s power that the snake immediately died. A yogi who observed

⁶⁸ Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī: An Outline of His Thought and a Study of His Image in the Eyes of Posterity* (Montreal 1971) 28, 60, 88, 62-68, 94-96; Ghulām ʿAlī Āzād Bilgrāmī, *Ṣubḥat al-marjān fī āthār Hindūstān*, ed. Muḥammad Faḍl al-Raḥmān al-Nadwī al-Siwānī (Aligarh 1972) i, 131-137.

⁶⁹ For a full discussion, see my *The Pool of Nectar: An Islamic Interpretation of Yoga* (SUNY Press, forthcoming).

this event recognized the shaykh as a perfected *siddha*.⁷⁰ This anecdote retains nothing of yogic practice, but simply perpetuates the hagiographic formula in which Sufis outperform yogis in thaumaturgy. Similarly, Shaykh ʿĪsā once told a disciple to seek his next master by visualization, whether he appeared to be a proper Sufi shaykh, a wild qalandar, or a yogi.⁷¹ Here the yogi functions simply as a stock comparison, to signify that which is least conventional for Sufi disciples; ʿĪsā would even approve of a disciple studying with a yogi if that would help the disciple advance.

The early Shattārī may have been aware of the potential tendency of their ecstatic approach to strain relations with the historical traditions of Islam. The tendency to provide a legitimizing multiple lineage for Shattārī masters is found already in biographical accounts of the founder of the Indian branch of the order, ʿAbd Allāh Shattārī (d. 832/1428-9), who is credited with Qādirī and Kubrawī initiations.⁷² Likewise Bahāʾ al-Dīn Anṣārī (d. 921/1515) was known as a Qādirī with a Shattārī affiliation (*mashrab*).⁷³ Muḥammad Ghawth himself claimed fourteen separate initiations in different Sufi orders. As a tentative observation concerning this phenomenon, I would propose that multiple initiation was a way of maximizing historical validation by tradition, by claiming as many possible avenues of contact with the founding figures of Sufism. The fact that this might be achieved by purely internal Uwaysī contacts is the homage that spontaneous ecstasy pays to historical tradition. In any case, a review of the history of the Shattārī order in the century after Muḥammad Ghawth provides a striking portrait of retreat from the bold claims of spiritual ecstasy. In the aftermath of repeated criticism and persecution of their chief organizer, later Shattārī masters modulated the natural tendency of ecstatic experience, and muted the urge to engage in boasting contests with the founding figures of mysticism. Persecution is always a political act, and its power can be inter-

⁷⁰ Rāshid 313-14, citing *Rawāʾiḥ al-anfās*, fol. 380.

⁷¹ Rāshid 46.

⁷² *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir* iii, 100-1, citing *Majmaʿ al-abrār* and *Gulzār-i abrār*.

⁷³ ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq 198.

nalized to the point of self-censorship. The circumspection of the later Shaṭṭārīs would seem to be evidence of the power of persecution to modify public behavior.

VEILED OPPOSITION TO SUFIS IN MUSLIM SOUTH ASIA:
DYNASTIC MANIPULATION OF MYSTICAL BROTHERHOODS BY
THE GREAT MUGHAL

BRUCE B. LAWRENCE

Sufis are as much a part of the social and cultural fabric of Muslim history in South Asia as are religious scholars and political elites. Sufi leaders, especially the masters (*mashā'ikh*) whose life histories and tomb cults have achieved wide renown, often belonged to the same privileged social class as those who supported or opposed them in each period of South-Asian history. But the nature of support, as also the basis for opposition, varied in response to a broad range of factors that need to be specified if we are to understand the pivotal role of *mashā'ikh* as spiritual exemplars and not merely beneficiaries of socioeconomic inequities.

Two hermeneutic guidelines inform this paper. One comes from the Maghribi student of Althusser, Abdallah Laroui. It is a caution against what he calls the ternary myth, that is, the notion that all history can be divided into three *equivalent* parts, whether ancient, medieval and modern or, in the case of Muslim South Asia, Sultanate, Mughal, and British. The pitfall is that too often the criteria of one period are imposed implicitly on the evaluation of data from other periods.¹ The second guideline comes from the anti-structuralist, post-Marxist anthropologist Talal Asad. It is in the form of a maxim rather than a shibboleth, namely, “that orthodoxy is always the product of a network of power”.²

In the Indian subcontinent the entire history of Sufi exemplars and Sufi orders — their vast literary corpus, cultic recall and symbolic persistence — can be framed within the above two guidelines. The Sultanate period is marked by enmity from religious scholars, or ulama, on the basis of their perception of orthodoxy as distinct from ecstatic experience. The chief controversy from this period is *samā'*,

¹ Abdallah Laroui, *The History of the Maghrib: An Interpretative Essay*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton 1977) 34.

² Talal Asad, ‘The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam’ (Washington D.C. 1986) 21.

listening to music and poetry in the hospices of *mashā'ikh*. The Mughal period is marked by enmity from the dynastic court. Dating from the mid-sixteenth century on, it centers on the independent claims to spiritual authority made by the *mashā'ikh* or their followers, with the only acceptable orthodoxy being loyalty to the Emperor and to his dicta as the military leader cum bureaucratic patron of a vast domain. In the British/modern period enmity to Sufis came from reform-minded Muslims who felt betrayed both by traditional centers of learning and also by dynastic successors to the Great Mughals. Their opposition focused, above all, on tomb cults and the alleged distance between reverence for deceased masters and Qur'anic orthodoxy.

Ironically, none of these phases in South-Asian history offers a pattern of opposition to Sufis that does not also include an acknowledgement of the spiritual prowess of the *mashā'ikh*, often by members of the same group who oppose them. Hence in the Sultanate period there were ulama who trained Sufi masters, who befriended them and who also became their disciples, just as in the Mughal period there were members of the court up to and including the Emperor who visited Sufi hospices, or provided for the (re)construction of Sufi tombs, and also employed descendants of *mashā'ikh* in their own service. Similarly, in the British/modern period, it was often the case that reform-minded Muslims were themselves marked by Sufi lineages, and in at least one notable case (the Tablighīs), they embraced Sufi notions of hierarchical authority in order to establish an organization that rivaled the traditional tomb cults.

Collectively these developments in Muslim South Asia throw into doubt a too neat, binary relationship of intrinsic hostility or irreconcilable enmity between Sufis and non-Sufis. Alternatively, their exposition makes possible something more important: the assessment of institutional Sufism as itself a major component of South-Asian Muslim identity. In order to explore this counter-intuitive approach to Sufism and its opponents in the Asian subcontinent, I will look broadly at the Mughal period, but in particular at the institutional enmity to Sufism that ironically came from the imperial court and from a person hagiographically described as a supporter of Sufis, the Emperor Akbar (1556-1605), also known as the Great Mughal.

There seem to be three major periods, marking the emergence, the elan and the decline of Akbar's nearly half-century as the Great Mughal. Respectively, they sort out as 1556-74, 1574-85, and 1585-1605. In the first period, from 1556 to 1574, the youthful Akbar at-

tempts to assert his independent imperial identity. At this point he had not yet met either the faithful chronicler Abū'l-Faḍl-i 'Allāmī, nor his foil 'Abd al-Qādir Badā'ūnī, though both later read back into this period the decisive promptings that came to characterize him as the Great Mughal. Uppermost was the obsession to expand his father Humāyūn's domain to include western India, above all, Rajasthan and Gujarat. It was a strategy that proved crucial for the internal cohesion of the fledgling Mughal polity. 'By uniting the maritime and commercial province of Gujarat with the agricultural heartlands of the Panjab and Gangetic basins, Akbar made possible an [unprecedented] expansion of trade and production within the Mughal state'.³ At the same time, the emperor identified himself with the founder of the Chishtī order in India. Since Mu'in ad-Dīn was popularly perceived to have introduced Islam itself to indigenous non-elites, Akbar seems to promote himself as the Chishtī master's latter day counterpart, the true founder of a lasting basis for Muslim rule in the subcontinent.

After 1574 Akbar did not disavow his interest in either western India or the Chishtīyya, but in the next period, from 1574-1585, he began to reflect on the larger profile of his own self-image that he wanted to project throughout the expanding Mughal imperium. In these years he resided at the new imperial city which he had constructed for his own purposes; at Fathpur Sikri Akbar enjoyed the geographical isolation and social control that only a self-created environment could provide. Beyond serving as a bureaucratic command post of unrivalled efficiency and a tableau of aesthetic achievement on the most diverse scale, Fathpur Sikri allowed Akbar to indulge his zest for idyllic seclusion. John Richards etches its mood:

'The new capital was a refuge reminiscent of those desert cantonments the Arabs founded in the seventh century to control their new conquests. The ruler could be free and at his ease, moving securely about the city....Akbar re-created in stone within the boundaries of Fatehpur-Sikri a comfortable and certainly grand encampment. It was an urban form somewhere between a camp and an imperial city'.⁴

Nothing could be more symbolic of the shift that occurred during the Fathpur Sikri period than the promulgation of a notion of divine

³ Fritz Lehmann, 'Akbar' in Elran i/7, 708.

⁴ John F. Richards, 'Fatehpur-Sikri: The Imperial Capital', *International Journal of Art and Art History* (1987) 70.

kingship that went beyond previous familiar and Muslim antecedents (e.g., Chinghiz Khan, Timur, the Delhi Sultans). Akbar legitimated himself as divine, or at least so it seemed. The emperor's dalliance with divinity has been the lodestone of historical investigation ever since. It bears sustained attention here.

While Akbar's sphere of action was the Indian subcontinent, it is not too much to say that he, with the assistance of Abū'l-Faḍl, cast himself in the role of a universal monarch. The evidence for this new model of Muslim kingship is limited to Abū'l-Faḍl's text and even though not everyone read Abū'l-Faḍl, the political theater of the Mughal court communicated this perspective as well as did Abū'l-Faḍl's words.⁵ Akbar was undoubtedly mindful of the Zoroastrian proclivity for royal effulgence (*khshwarena*), the monarch symbolized as divine light,⁶ but he also drew on the Hindu tradition, especially the notion of the king as a microcosm of the universe (*rajaḥbhiseka*), enhancing its visual effect through the newly constituted *darbar* or royal audience. Douglas Streusand summarizes the stages of Akbar's self-conception:

'The Mughal doctrine of kingship thus asserted that the dynasty held sovereignty as a special emanation from God, which reached complete fruition in Akbar after many centuries of maturation. He transmitted sovereignty to his descendants just as he had received it (from his ancestors). Possession of the light of sovereignty made the Mughal emperor a microcosmic Perfect Man, who subsumes all of the elements of the universe, and thus of society, in his body. This doctrine resembles the "standard" model of Hindu kingship in the *rajaḥbhiseka*, which presumably facilitated Hindu acceptance of the Mughal ruler as an actual (i.e., legitimate) monarch. Recognizable rituals such as *jhārūka darshān* and the weighing ceremony also contributed to acceptance. Mughal rituals and texts articulated kingship of a higher order than that of earlier Muslim rulers in the subcontinent; the common practice of calling the Mughals emperors as opposed to (and distinct from) the Delhi sultans thus has validity. (In this connection the *darbar* also functioned as) ...a model of society and thus of the world...'⁷

Akbar did not, however, neglect resonant Islamic symbols. One that was as significant as it was fraught with danger concerned ex-

⁵ Douglas E. Streusand, *The Formation of the Mughal Empire* (New Delhi 1989), chapter 6 makes this point as well as many others with unusual insight. Much of the inspiration to rethink the significance of periodizing Akbar's reign comes from this remarkable monograph.

⁶ For the reference to *khshwarena*, the Zoroastrian notion of cosmic splendor refracted through divinely favored monarchs, I am grateful to Norvin Hein, my first teacher and still the inspiration for much of my work on South-Asian culture.

⁷ Streusand, op. cit. 138.

pectations of time as registered in calendrical systems. During the years at Fathpur Sikri he not only engaged numerous religious authorities in public discourse at the famed *ʿibādat-khana*, he also projected himself as the fulfillment of a lengthy but purposeful historical process. To gain recognition as universal monarch, however, he had to situate his reign within a temporal framework that reflected his royal aspirations. He was assisted by the fact that his lifetime coincided with the end of the first Islamic millennium. Yet others, aware of the potency of that calendrical reckoning, did not immediately relate it either to the Indo-Timurid dynasty or to Akbar. During the Sūrī interregnum (1540-1555), a Mahdawī spokesman, Alāʿī, himself a latter-day disciple of Sayyid Muḥammad Jawnpūrī (d. 1505), had attracted numerous disciples in Agra before meeting a grisly death in 1550. Since Alāʿī included among his own disciples men as disparate as Mubārak, the father of Abū'l-Faḍl and the author of *Āʿīn-i akbarī*, and Badāʿūnī, Akbar must have been aware of Mahdawī millennialism. Some scholars, including Blochmann, have gone so far as to claim that Akbar commissioned the massive *Tārīkh-i alfī* as an explicit rejoinder to Sunni millennialism. Its multiple volumes were intended

‘to represent Islam as a thing of the past; it had existed a thousand (*alf*) years, and had done its work. The early history, to the vexation of the Sunnis, was related from a Shia point of view, and worse still, the chronology had been changed, inasmuch as the death of the Prophet had been made the starting point, not the hijra, or flight of the Prophet from Makka to Madina’.⁸

But the true significance of *Tārīkh-i alfī* seems to lie elsewhere. As S.A.A. Rizvi has correctly noted, it was ‘to emphasize the glory of Islam’s expansion as a political power, rather than a (solely) religious phenomenon’.⁹ Akbar wanted a record of previous Islamic polities that would represent his own territorial expansion within South Asia as a natural, an expected, even a divinely sanctioned development. He strove to culminate not terminate Islamic history. To put his own stamp on all that had occurred prior to and during his reign, Akbar manipulated calendrical markings. By changing the year of reckoning Islamic history from the *hijrī* base year (622) to

⁸ See H. Blochmann, *Ain-i Akbari* (Calcutta 1873), introduction, xli. But Badāʿūnī’s comments are not so polemically couched as Blochmann implies; see Abd al-Qādir Badāyūnī, *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*, tr. W.H. Lowe (Calcutta 1898) ii, 301, 318.

⁹ S.A.A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of the Muslims in Akbar’s Reign* (New Delhi 1975) 258-59.

the *rihla* base year (632) — a move that Mu^cammar al-Qadhdhāfi emulated four centuries later! — he might have offended some Sunni millennialists, but the majority believed that the end of the epoch required renewal (*tajdīd*), which is to say, rededication to Islamic principles, rather than the apocalyptic closure of all human history. In his composition plan for *Tārīkh-i alfī*, simultaneously preempted and transformed *all* millennialist expectations. Anticipating 1591 as the end of the millennium by a *hijrī* calendrical count, in 1584 he introduced through a royal decree the new *ilāhī* era for reckoning the diachronic phases of his own dynasty. It was not intended to displace other calendars but rather, in Akbar's own words, 'to enter this new era as a supplement to them, and so open the gates of prosperity'.¹⁰ In making the first year *ilāhī* equivalent to *Nawrōz* 1556, Abū'l-Faḍl signalled his true intent: to ensure that 'the glory of the noble family (i.e. the Mughal dynasty) will be for thousands and thousands of years world-lighting and world-gripping, and that the number of (its) years and months will continually surpass the dates and reckonings of calculators of celestial cycles'.¹¹

By the time that Abū'l-Faḍl began writing the *Akbar-nāma* in 1590, the splendid isolation of Fathpur Sikri had ended, and the vision of universal redirection that it had fostered must have also begun to dim. However, the end of the first Islamic millennium had not yet occurred. Diehard millennialists might still have nurtured hope that their expectations of a global cataclysm would be fulfilled. By inserting the *ilāhī* era as an alternate calendrical reckoning, Akbar diverts attention from the end of the first Islamic millennium in 1591. The advent of the second Islamic millennium is never celebrated. Yet five months later, the Persian New Year (*nawrōz*) occasions a major court festival which Abū'l-Faḍl describes at length while omitting any allusion to millennial fervor.¹²

¹⁰ Abu'l-Faḍl, *Akbar-nāma*, tr. H. Beveridge (Calcutta 1907-1939) ii, 23.

¹¹ Ibid. ii, 17-18.

¹² Ibid. iii, 927-28. K.A. Nizami has also drawn attention to the significance of Akbar's manipulation of calendrical eras; see *Akbar and Religion* (New Delhi 1989) 142-146. In general, this book from the premier historian of Indo-Muslim Sufism offers numerous reflections on Akbar's thought and personality as well as on his religio-political ideals and their reception.

Akbar was absorbed with notions of time. He frankly reckoned his own rule to be the most important in human history. Yet the major challenges to his political preeminence were less mystical than military. While the suppression of the Afghan generals in the east (1580-82) and the defeat of Muẓaffar Khān in Gujarat (1583-84) had been accomplished through surrogates, the rebellion of his half-brother Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥakīm in the Punjab required the presence of the emperor himself. Akbar had to decamp. He moved his capital north to meet the challenge of Mīrzā Muḥammad.

During the final period of his life, from 1585 till his death in 1605, Akbar lived out the legacy of his Fathpur Sikri years, but without making extensive alterations, either in the administration of the empire or in the provision for his own succession. He defeated Mīrzā Muḥammad with comparative ease, and then undertook the difficult conquest of Kashmir (1586-89), which was followed by forays into Sind, Orissa and parts of the Deccan in the fifteen-nineties. In retrospect, these final decades appear as a kind of twilight tailspin to the Mughal god-king. Even when his own health began to fail, he did not attempt reconciliation with his designated successor, Salīm, while two other sons, Dāniyāl and Murād, predeceased him, proving themselves more worthy with the bottle than on the battlefield.¹³ The question of succession was to prove all important for the fate of the Mughal dynasty, and it is important to note its shortcomings before considering the implications of imperial policy for the Sufi orders.

The actual causes of the estrangement between Akbar and Prince Salīm seem to have been provoked in part by the former's longevity, in part by the latter's anxiety about the outcome of court intrigues in which he was but one of several contestants for divine favor. In his own memoirs Jahāngīr gives slim indication of the immediate provocations for his attempt to declare himself emperor in Allahabad while Akbar was conducting military maneuvers in the Deccan.¹⁴ In the *Akbar-nāma* Abū'l-Faḍl is more direct. Early entries had implied that the relationship between the emperor and the heir apparent was marked by nothing but paternal solicitude.¹⁵ But the mood changes from 1589 on. The year 1589 marks the first of three occasions when

¹³ For a summary of the final years, see Richards, op.cit. 70-71.

¹⁴ See *Tūẓuk-i Jahāngīr*, tr. A. Rogers, ed. H. Beveridge (London 1909-1914) i, 24-25.

¹⁵ See especially *Akbar-nāma* iii, 401 and 583 on provisions for Prince Salīm's education; elsewhere for his numerous marriages.

Prince Salīm, then twenty years of age, offends his father.¹⁶ Even more astonishingly, Abū'l-Faḍl sets forth, albeit in opaque terms, the circumstances of an altercation that took place between himself and Prince Salīm in 1598.¹⁷ Though it would seem to have been provoked through third-party intervention, Prince Salīm's wariness of Abū'l-Faḍl soon led to the latter's murder in 1602.¹⁸

In retrospect the major value of the third phase is instrumental and didactic: by bracketing it with the initiatives of the first phase (1556-1574) and the accomplishments of the second phase (1574-1585), one begins to grasp not only the singularity of the half-century of Akbar's reign but also the determinative importance of the first thirty years.

What none of the official accounts does explain is the nature of the Sufi brotherhoods and the attitude of their legatees and devotees toward the emperor. There are many questions that need to be asked. All relate to the particular pattern of Islamic religiosity that emerged under Akbar. The more we become familiar with the contours of Akbar's rich and varied life the more questions emerge. By the mid-sixteenth century what were the loci of spiritual authority for particular Sufi orders? Were they all in suspension during the half-century of Akbar's reign? How did they evolve an alternative spiritual authority to the emperor? Did the suppression of veneration for contemporary saints compel Sufi devotees to go back to earlier saints as the determinative source of guidance? How did local tombs and their custodians function *vis-à-vis* major shrines situated elsewhere within or beyond the boundaries of Mughal hegemony? What strategies did saints use to deflect attention from their competition with other symbols of temporal/spiritual power, including the emperor himself?

All these questions move between syntactics and semantics, that is, between an unconscious, or at least non-articulated, worldview and its conscious reiteration in oral and literary discourse. It would seem that the major encounter which frames every judgment about the royal court and institutional Sufism takes place between Akbar and Salīm Chishtī. Because it looms so large in the *Akbar-nāma* account,¹⁹ it has dominated much subsequent historical attention, yet it

¹⁶ *Akbar-nāma* iii, 824-5, 1088, and 1217.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* iii, 1104-7.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* iii, 1218-21. The *Akbar-nāma* itself was later completed by Muḥibb 'Alī; see *Akbar-nāma* iii, 1201-5.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* ii, 502-507.

begs for consideration in terms other than the imperial ideology with which it is presented to both contemporary and later readers. At the very least we have a series of suppressed motives for the common bonding between the Shaykh and the emperor that go beyond explicit texts and compel speculation about implicit motives and unconscious drives. Consider Salīm's mystical genealogy. He not only belongs to a Sufi order but to a sub-branch within it. The Faridī line is traceable back to another ascetic, miracle-working recluse, Farid Ganj-i Shakār (d. 1265). Without denying the spiritual motives attributed to the emperor by Abū'l-Faḍl, we can see another, pragmatic motive at work: Akbar identifies with an illustrious India-specific order, enhancing his own legitimation as a South-Asian Muslim monarch. For all the retrospective stress on the security of Akbar's claim to rule, one may still doubt that he quickly forgot the exile of his father Humāyūn from India, due to his inability to counter the ideological claims as well as the military prowess of Shēr Shāh Sūrī of Bihar.

Alternatively, however, Akbar might have linked himself to the then dominant tomb complex of North India, the *mazār* of Nizām ad-Dīn Awliyā (d. 1325) in Delhi. Why didn't he? Both K.A. Nizami and S. Digby have indicated the extent to which the Nizāmī affiliates of the Chishtiyya, as also the tomb of Nizām ad-Dīn, dominated during the Lodi period.²⁰ In 1564, during his eighth regnal year, Akbar does attempt a pilgrimage to the tomb of Nizām ad-Dīn but he is wounded by an assailant.²¹ Though the injury is minor, the incident resonates with symbolic undertones: Delhi was the stronghold of the ruling Muslim elites. Delhi itself had been the capital of Muslim dynasties in North India until Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517) had opted to make Agra his capital. Agra had continued to serve as the capital for his successor, the last Lodi sultan, Ibrāhīm (1517-1526). It remained the imperial center for the brief period of Bābur's reign (1526-1530), while Humāyūn, both before and after his exile in Iran, preferred Delhi.²²

In securing his own rule at Agra (1556-1570), Akbar had to be aware of the tension between Agra and Delhi as rival imperial centers. It may have been in part due to their asymmetry (Delhi having

²⁰ See especially K.A. Nizami, EI, s.v. Chishtiyya.

²¹ *Akbar-nāma* ii, 312-15.

²² Gavin Hambly, EIran, s.v. Agra.

the longer history, Agra the more immediate strategic advantage) that Akbar sought another base from which to project his distinctive version of imperial authority. But one could not simply choose another site. The choice had to have symbolic and legitimating power such that others would be led to accept the rightness of the emperor's decision. He chose to build a mausoleum for Salīm Chishtī in the courtyard of the Jamī^c Masjid of his new capital city, Fathpur Sikri. Linking Fathpur Sikri to the saint who predicted the birth of his heirs and successors made its selection as a new imperial center logical, even compelling. There were also other advantages that appealed to the spiritual dimension of Akbar's multifaceted personality. Having chosen Fathpur Sikri, he was able to confirm and continue his affiliation with the tomb of Shaikh Mu^cin al-Dīn in Rajasthan while also drawing on the power of a living saint, Salīm Chishtī, and through him on the spiritual *baraka* that derived from his ascetic patron, Farid al-Din Ganj-i Shakār in the Punjab. Through a two-fold, redoubled Chishtī loyalty, Akbar could anchor his imperial legitimacy in provinces adjacent to Uttar Pradesh, the Punjab and Rajasthan, both of which also happened to be crucial to the political-military ambitions of his reign.

As important as Akbar's affiliation with Chishtī saints was for the Fathpur Sikri phase of his life, it becomes irrelevant after that period, i.e., for the final twenty years of his reign. His abrupt shift in loyalty had an impact on institutional Sufism that reverberated throughout the Mughal period. We have already noted that neither Salīm nor Mu^cin ad-Dīn could be a constant focus of Akbar's allegiance, any more than Fathpur Sikri could remain his permanent capital city; it was, after all, the emperor not a place nor a saint who was lauded as the apogee of authority — spiritual and temporal — in the Mughal polity as reconceived by Akbar. To the extent that his person did become, in Richards' apt phrase, "the metaphor for empire", spiritual luminaries could only function alongside the imperial cult by being linked to or subordinated within the aura of ultimate authority arrogated to Akbar and to him alone. The absolutist claims which were raised by Akbar, or by Abū'l-Faḍl in *Akbar-nāma*, forced a redefinition of both sainthood and dynastic succession. We will consider, in turn, the problems of situating the Chishtī order in this changed milieu and then the dilemma posed to Akbar's designated successor, Prince Salīm, the future Jahāngir.

We would expect to find evidence about the Chishtiyya in the chronicles of Abū'l-Faḍl, but in fact, apart from *Akbar-nāma* ac-

counts of Akbar's frequent visits to the tomb of Khwāja Mu^cin al-Dīn and the emperor's encounter with Salīm, the *Ā'in-i akbarī* biographical profiles for all Indian saints, including the Chishtīs, are pithy, formulaic recapitulations of minimal interest.²³ Most of the data they set forth can be gleaned from earlier *tadhkiras* that must have been available to Abū'l-Faḍl. By contrast, we would expect to find in *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh* of Badā'ūnī, the alleged defender of orthodoxy, only diatribes about Sufi excesses or else the suppression of information about saints who influenced Akbar. The opposite is in fact the case. Badā'ūnī extols many saints, often recapitulating personal episodes in which he encountered or was embarrassed by them.

It is necessary to look at both these oddities before setting them within the context of the one reliable *tadhkira* we have from Akbar's reign: *Akhbār al-akhyār* of ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dihlawī.²⁴ Abū'l-Faḍl, despite his eclectic, libertarian interests, is not engaged by the disciplined life of Sufi ascetics. He never expresses an interest in visiting hospices or engaging in discussion about mystical/exegetical/theological issues. His chief skill is in pressing Sufi metaphors into service as equivalent tropes for eulogizing the emperor. Badā'ūnī, despite his judgmental tone, is a restless seeker after spiritual truth.

In reading *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*, one constantly feels that its author was the victim of bad timing and poor judgment. Although he had an opportunity to secure imperial favor in 1577 at the time of ʿAbd al-Nabī's fall from imperial favour, he neglected to capitalize on the attention Akbar showed him, turning his greatest moment into an unredeemable failure. It was a charged moment: ʿAbd al-Nabī, who had been the emperor's confidant and trusted advisor for more than a decade (since the dismissal of Bayrām Khān in 1561), was being tested for his decision to execute a *brahman* who had defiled the name of the Prophet. The heated discussion at court had reached the point where the emperor, clearly unable to decide, looked for assistance from those present. Badā'ūnī tells the narrative in his own self-effacing style that only serves to underscore the pathos of the moment.²⁵ The contrast with Mubārak, the father of Abū'l-Faḍl,

²³ See *Ā'in-i akbarī* ii, 388-423.

²⁴ It is itself an indicator of the imperial tone set by Akbar that there was little royal incentive to compile *tadhkiras*; in addition to *Akhbār al-akhyār*, we have only its near clone, the *Akhbār al-asfiyā*. On the *Akhbār al-akhyār*, see my article in *Elran* 1/7:711-712.

²⁵ See *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh* iii, 130-131.

could not be more acute. When he subsequently came to court, the emperor queried him, too, about the affair of ʿAbd al-Nabī and the now deceased *brahman*. Judiciously Mubārak deferred to Akbar as “the *imām* and *mujtahid* of the age”, i.e., whatever he declared was fitting, just and acceptable. Subsequently Mubārak drafted the *maḥḍar* which, in Badāʿūnī’s words, ‘affirmed the spiritual supremacy of the Emperor and his superiority to all religious functionaries’.²⁶

However, by the time that this contest is being waged at the royal court (1577), the Chishtī *silsila* has already lost whatever benefit its partisans — whether shrine custodians, living saints, or Hindu/Muslim devotees — may have gained by the favor that Akbar had showered upon them. It is one of the seldom noted ironies about ʿAbd al-Nabī that his family lineage directly linked him to one of the foremost Chishtī saints of Babur’s period, ʿAbd al-Quddūs Gangōhī (d. 1537), just as Mubārak could trace his lineage back to a still earlier Chishtī forbear, Hamīd ad-Dīn Suwalī Nagorī (d. 1274). Both courtiers, however, were removed from active advocacy of either their own Sufi legacy or the active mystical interests of others. Nor did the construction of Salīm’s tomb within the walled courtyard of the Jamīʿ Masjid at Fathpur Sikri promote the spiritual agenda of the Chishtī lineage that he represented. On the one hand, as Richards has pointedly noted, Akbar, ‘by placing the Chishtīs in the congregational mosque, affirmed their legitimate role in Islam — a symbolic statement that surely was deliberate. (At the same time, however,) the founding of Fatehpur-Sikri was clearly meant to be an affirmation of the emperor’s orthodoxy and the legitimacy that he claimed for his rule’.²⁷

Moreover, following the *maḥḍar*, Akbar continues to command allegiance more to his person than to any achievement, even the mosque-tomb complex of Fathpur Sikri. In the visit to Nizām ad-Dīn of Narnaul (1579), we had noted how Akbar showed scant regard for the aged ascetic. The next year when the holy foot stone is brought back from Mecca, he feigns interest but actually (if we believe Abūʾl-Faḍl) doubts its authenticity. In 1581 he again visits an esteemed saint, Jalāl Thanesari, a disciple of the most famous Sabiri

²⁶ Ibid. iii, 131.

²⁷ Richards, op.cit. 67.

Chishtī master, ‘Abd al-Quddūs Gangōhī (d. 1537),²⁸ but it is the saint who praises the emperor and submits to his authority, rather than the reverse role, which would be expected and which Akbar followed in his early pilgrimage to Ajmer and subsequent engagement of Salīm. Most telling of all, Akbar does not dignify any saint’s tomb with his presence after 1580. The evidence of the *Akbar-nāma* about the pattern of Akbar’s visits to saints’ tombs is revelatory of the emperor’s changed mood. After the momentous events of 1579, Akbar visits Delhi once and spends most of his time at Humāyūn’s tomb, and when he last visits Delhi in 1585 he does not visit any tomb but Humāyūn’s. The pattern of visitation, and the actual exclusion or failure of Abū’l-Faḍl to mention a visit to Ghiyāspur, implies that Akbar has devalued the spiritual potency of the Chishtī connection. The same conclusion can be drawn from other evidence, but it is confirmed at the point where Akbar is most visible, his travel to appointed places of merit or remembrance in between rounds of military engagement. It is, therefore, impossible to say, as Akbar apologists have repeatedly tried to do, that the greatest Mughal remained faithful to Sufi Muslim exemplars to the end of his life.

More attention needs to be paid to the saintly biographies that Badā’ūnī included in *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh*. Not only do they exude a freshness lacking in the comparable section of *Ā’in-i akbarī*, they also indicate the variety of spiritual endeavors that were taking place outside the royal court though not in explicit competition with the imperial cult increasingly focused on Akbar after 1574, i.e. for almost the entirety of his reign at Fathpur Sikri. One must recall that Badā’ūnī had no illusions of obtaining a reward for his book. He did not write to please a powerful patron. He may have, at most, entertained the hope of some historical redress. Above all, he wanted to acquit himself at the court of Divine Justice, as is clear from his final supplication: ‘Please God this work will, for a while, be preserved from the treachery of lack of preservation, of faithlessness, or of evil guardian-ship... and being constantly hidden under the protection of God’s guardianship, will receive the ornament of acceptance...’.²⁹ Even if one discounts the author’s special pleading for the authority

²⁸ See *Akbar-nama* iii, 341–42 (transl. iii, 500–501), and also the discussion in Rizvi, op. cit. 163–164.

²⁹ *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh* iii, 535–36.

of his own experience, the sum total of these individual accounts provides unexpected answers to the questions that we posed above. Far from being suppressed, the orders showed a resilience in their regional manifestations. The strongest claimants to spiritual authenticity were those shaykhs who combined a grounding in the traditional religious sciences of Sunni Islam with an attachment to mystical pursuits. Two examples will show the consistency with which Badā'ūnī applied his principle: Nizām al-Din Ambethi³⁰ and Dā'ūd Chāṭī.³¹ In both cases Badā'ūnī dwells on noble ancestry, pursuit of learning, and also calm judgment under fire. The present-voice narrative infuses his account of these and other saints. They come alive as holy men constantly being tested, whether by jealous notables, a distant sultan or a persistent visitor. With Nizām al-Din it is Badā'ūnī who is the overzealous guest, making a verbal faux pas that seems to doom him from obtaining the saint's favor. In the case of Dā'ūd it is the saint himself who, during the Sūrī interregnum, is set up to be the victim of a court conspiracy against Sufi masters (perhaps because of his Mahdawī persuasions), but his gracious manners and sound learning not only rescue him but turn the tables on his would-be persecutors.

The winsomeness of Badā'ūnī's Sufi biographies suggests the move of intercalating his vignettes with the acknowledged master of Mughal hagiography, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dihlawī. 'Abd al-Ḥaqq is himself the subject of one of Badā'ūnī's sketches, and so the comparison is not as far-fetched or impertinent as it might at first appear to be. Like Badā'ūnī, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq was among the Indo-Persian scholarly elite of the late sixteenth century: even though he survived well into the reign of Shāh Jahān, his most famous *Tadhkira*, *Akhhār al-akhyār*, was written during the third phase of the Akbar period, ca. 999/1591. Also like Badā'ūnī, he was not beholden to the new imperial ideology constructed by Abū'l-Faḍl and advocated by Akbar in the late fifteen-seventies. Even though he studied at Fathpur Sikri as a teenager, by age twenty-one (1572) he opted to return to Delhi, where he had been born and reared, where his parents still resided, and where he could teach in his father's *madrassa*.

Unlike Badā'ūnī, however, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq is clearly writing his

³⁰ Ibid. 27f.

³¹ Ibid. 47f.

work for public dissemination. In the light of Badāʿūnī's fears, his literary strategy has to be subtly shaped, at once revealing and concealing his true intentions. Unable to disagree with Akbar directly, he also cannot follow the not so subtle pattern of Badāʿūnī's clandestine work: to criticize those who were the confidants of the emperor, especially Fayḍī and Abū'l-Faḍl. Instead, ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq constructs his work in such a way that it both supports Akbar's imperial agenda and at the same time offers an alternative set of spiritual authorities. He lauds the Chishtī epigones of virtue but does not dwell on Salīm. Rather, he adopts a diachronic scheme which begins with the Chishtīs and so with Muʿīn al-Dīn and then progresses generationally through the Delhi Sultanate to the Akbarī era. The saints who merit most extensive attention and whose biographies mirror ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq's disposition are the later Qādirīs. They were the spiritual precursors of his father, Sayf al-Dīn, and also his own mentor, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb. So generous does he appear to be toward all saints that a censor would have been hard pressed to fault him either on his organizational strategy or his individual entries, which total over 250. In short, ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq attempted to be more than a pawn in the grand design for expanding Mughal hegemony that Akbar, with assistance from his courtiers, directed. Yet the Delhi savant could not operate outside the constraints of a bureaucratic structure that dominated, even as it animated, all aspects of an expansive Indo-Persian culture.

What emerges then from our examination of the case study of Mughal India at the time of Akbar is a cautionary flag about assuming that the opponents of Sufism were always declared enemies. It is too easy, and also too simplistic, to chart a picture of us versus them, implying that the enemies were 'orthodox' Muslims and that it was Sufis who were guilty of mystical excesses entailing antinomian violations of sharia. The thesis here advanced is that the very nature of claims made by *mashāʾikh*, as also by their successors and by the custodians of their tomb complexes, leads to conflict with dynastic centrists, however liberal their outlook and policy. A corollary of this thesis is that the conflict which emerges between the saint and the king, between the spiritual and the political emperor, will be charted less by opposition to Sufism as a whole than by the preference for certain Sufis over others. Most importantly, in each case where there are multiple brotherhoods, and multiple contenders for spiritual pre-eminence, the choice of brotherhood and spiritual exemplar will be made by the dynast as much on the basis of impe-

rial need as on mystical insight or spiritual suasions.

Ideology camouflaged remains a powerful force in the reckoning of preference for, or opposition to, institutional Sufism. The case study of one time frame and one dynast from Mughal India might be seen as an exception in Islamic social history; but the opposite conclusion is equally plausible, namely, that the manipulations of Akbar highlight a general occurrence throughout premodern Muslim empires, one that deserves far more detailed study than it has received up till now .

CRITICIZING THE SUFIS: THE DEBATE IN EARLY- NINETEENTH-CENTURY INDIA

MARC GABORIEAU

A radical breakaway from Sufi traditions by modernists and neo-fundamentalists starts in India in the second half of the nineteenth century. Before that time Sufism was an integral part of Indian Islam, even if it was criticized for abuses and excesses. In this period even reform movements which are often loosely labelled as Wahhābī retained an important Sufi dimension. This is borne out by the following quotation from one of the works of Abū'l-A°lā Mawdūdī (1903-1979):

‘The one weakness which in my opinion has always attended the work of our reformers ever since the time of *Mujaddid-i alf-i thani* [Aḥmad Sirhindī (1564-1624)] till Shāh Waliullah (1703-1762) and his successors may be ascribed to their failure to form a correct view of the Muslim peoples’ morbid attachment for *Tasawwuf*. This was a malady which might well have been cured by taking necessary precautions... True to God, I bear no personal grudge against the *Tasawwuf* presented by these reformers: in spirit it was indeed the real *Tasawwuf* of Islam, nothing different from *Ihsan*. But what I think should be carefully eschewed, are the mystic allusions and metaphoric references, the mystic language, and the continuance of a peculiar mystic lore, customs and traditions... The large-scale diffusion of these mystic abuses among the common people has in fact produced the worst religious and moral degeneration too well known to the right-minded people...

Just as a pure and lawful thing as water is prohibited when it is deemed to be harmful to a patient, similarly the cult of *Tasawwuf*, though allowable, needs to be eschewed and laid aside. For through it the Muslims have become addicted to a kind of intoxication which has lulled them into sleep and sapped them of life and reality for centuries. As soon as *bai‘at* is performed, the disciples start developing a servile mentality which has become intimately associated with the system of discipleship...

Though Maulana Ismail Shahid (1779-1831) fully estimated the extent of the abuses and followed strictly the same practical approach as had been adopted by Imam Ibn-i-Taimiyyah (1263-1328), the writings of Shah Waliullah, nevertheless, contained references to his mystic experiences and this affected his own writings as well. Then, on the practical side, the tradition of saint-disciple relationship had been associated with the movement of Sayyid Ahmad (1786-1831) from the very beginning. Therefore, this movement also could not remain immune from the fatal germs of the mystic abuse. So much so that after the martyrdom of Sayyid Ahmad a section of his followers began cherishing like the *Shiahs* the doctrine of ‘disappearance’ and

they still eagerly await his reappearance [as a *mahdī*].

Now therefore, if somebody wishes and plans to revive Islam, he must shun the language and the terminology of the Sufis, their mystic allusions and metaphoric references, their dress and etiquette, the saint-disciple institution and all other things associated with it. Indeed he must make the Muslims abstain from these abuses just as a diabetic is warned to abstain from sugar'.¹

This quotation also illustrates the difference between the twentieth-century neo-fundamentalists who want to do away with Sufism completely, and the early-nineteenth-century reformers such as Ḥājji Sharīʿat Allāh and his son Muḥammad Muḥsin (Dūdhū Miyān) in eastern Bengal, and Sayyid Aḥmad Barēlwī in the Panjab and the North-West Frontier Province. The followers of the former, known as the Farāʿīdiyya, performed Qādirī *dhikr*,² and the followers of the latter, known as *ṭarīqa-i Muḥammadiyya* were initiated into the major Sufi orders. Thus, in both cases, Sufism was an integral part of doctrine and practice; criticism focused on abuses which were perceived to be later accretions and did not concern Sufism as such.

The movement of Sayyid Aḥmad is particularly important: it standardized most of the arguments used to justify criticism of the Sufis in India till today. Thus, in the following pages we will examine the doctrine expounded in the main texts of the movement, and we will reflect on its consistency and its possible origins. This is not only of historical interest, but may contribute to a better understanding of the anti-Sufi polemics in modern South Asia.

The conventional chronology of the movement is usually based on the biography of Sayyid Aḥmad Barēlwī.³ The most recent and comprehensive account of the movement⁴ allows for the following summary.

Sayyid Aḥmad was born in 1786 in Rae Bareilly, in Awadh, in a family which cultivated the traditions of mystical life and soldiery. This family was based at the shrine of their ancestor Sayyid ʿAlamu'llāh (1624-1684), a Naqshbandī saint. As a child Sayyid

¹ Abū'l-Aʿlā Mawdūdī, *Short History of the Revivalist Movement in Islam*, transl. by Al-Ashʿarī (Lahore 1963, first publ. in Urdu in 1940) 105-8.

² Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan, *History of the Farāʿīdī Movement in Bengal, 1818-1906* (Dhaka 1984, 2nd ed.) chapt. 7, 273.

³ EI, s.v. Aḥmad Barēlwī; Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd; his Life and Mission* (Lucknow 1975).

⁴ Sayyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and his Time: Puritanism, Sectarianism, Polemics and Jihād* (Canberra 1982) 473-97.

Aḥmad took more interest in martial arts than in studies. Unable to find employment in Lucknow, he went to study in Delhi in 1803 or 1804. Here again, he showed little taste and predisposition for exoteric sciences, but proved to be a gifted mystic: he was outwardly initiated by Shāh ʿAbdu'l-ʿAzīz (1746-1824); but, in true Naqshbandī fashion, he claimed that his real initiation was that of an *uwaysī*, directly initiated by the Prophet, Fāṭima, ʿAlī and finally God Himself.⁵ In 1808 he came back to Rae Bareilly, and married. In 1811-1812 he returned to Delhi for a few months. And then, from 1812 to 1817, he had a first career as a soldier in the army of an Afghan adventurer, Amīr Khān (1768-1834), who eventually became the *nawwāb* of the small Muslim principality of Tonk in Rajasthan in 1817 when he was compelled by the British to disband his army.

By 1818, with the final defeat of the Marathas, the *Pax Britannica* was effective in North India, with the exception of the Sikh kingdom (in Panjab, North-West Frontier and Kashmir) which was annexed only in 1849. Sayyid Aḥmad settled in Delhi in the middle of 1818 and started his second career as a reformer which was to last up to his death in 1831. The first manifesto of his movement, the *Širāṭ al-mustaqīm*, was written in Persian by Ismāʿīl Shahīd (d. 1831) and ʿAbdu'l-Ḥayy (d. 1828), a son-in-law of Shāh ʿAbdu'l-ʿAzīz, allegedly in 1818. This is the year in which, according to the conventional chronology, both men were initiated by Sayyid Aḥmad into what most commentators consider to be a new Sufī order, the *ṭarīqa-i Muḥammadiyya*. This second career of Sayyid Aḥmad had three phases: preaching reform in the plains of the Ganges from 1818 to 1821; his pilgrimage to Mecca with more than six-hundred disciples from 1821 to 1824; and raising the call to *jihād* after his return to India. In 1826 he instigated a very indecisive *jihād* against the Sikhs from Peshawar (present North-West Pakistan) which met with a crushing defeat in the battle of Balakot in 1831. Here, Sayyid Aḥmad and Ismāʿīl Shahīd were killed. However, since Sayyid Aḥmad's body was not found after the battle, his disciples believed he had simply disappeared and would return to lead them to victory. In this manner, he had, in a sense, a third posthumous career as a *mahdī* for several decades after his death.

⁵ Marc Gaborieau, 'The description of Sufism in the first manifesto of the Indian Wahhabis: the *Širāṭu'l-mustaqīm* by Ismāʿīl Shahīd and ʿAbdu'l-Ḥayy (c. 1818)', in Muzaffar Alam, Françoise 'Nalini' Delvoye, Marc Gaborieau (eds.), *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture. Indian and French Essays* (Delhi, in the press).

In the conventional account, the start of the movement coincides with the establishment of the *Pax Britannica*, which enabled Sayyid Aḥmad to embark on his second career as a reformer in 1818. This presupposes that Sayyid Aḥmad himself is the one who initiated and inspired the reform movement. According to this view, it is only after he had given the first original impulse, that his main disciple, Ismāʿīl Shahīd, started to write down in detail his reformist doctrine in the Persian manifesto *Širāṭ al-mustaqīm*. This was followed by a tract in Arabic, *Radd al-ishrāk*, which is believed to have been written during the stay in Mecca and Medina in 1822-1823.⁶ The first part of *Radd al-ishrāk* was translated into Urdu by Ismāʿīl Shahīd himself and became his most famous book, the *Taqwiyat al-īmān*, which he completed in India in 1824. The second part was translated in 1834-1835 by one of Ismāʿīl Shahīd's disciples, Muḥammad Sulṭān Khān Shāhābādī or Shāhjahānpūrī,⁷ under the title *Tadhkīr al-ikhwān*.

Practically all the literature of the movement has been written by Ismāʿīl Shahīd who appears as the main ideologue. What we know for certain about the chronology of his activities before he became associated with Sayyid Aḥmad in 1818⁸ mainly derives from a romanticized biography written in Urdu,⁹ and does not allow for a coherent account of his life. He was born in 1779 as the son of ʿAbdu'l-Ghanī (d. 1789), the youngest son of Shāh Walīullāh (1703-1762), and became an orphan at the age of ten. Subsequently, he was adopted and trained by his paternal uncle Shāh ʿAbdu'l-Qādir (1753-1815) who was also to be the tutor of Sayyid Aḥmad. Ismāʿīl studied martial arts and religious sciences; he brilliantly completed his studies at the age of sixteen, i.e. around 1795. Thereafter, he started his career as a preacher in the Jāmiʿ Masjid of Delhi, where his sermons against the cult of Muslim saints, graves, and martyrs, demons, fairies and Hindu gods and goddesses aroused hostility from the reli-

⁶ Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 509. For a detailed conspectus of the literature produced by the movement see Marc Gaborieau, 'Late Persian, Early Urdu: The Case of "Wahhābī" Literature (1818-1857)', in Françoise 'Nalini' Delvoye (ed.), *Confluence of Culture. French Contributions to Indo-Persian Studies* (Delhi 1994) 170-196.

⁷ Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 509; Nūr al-Ḥasan Rashīd Kāndhalawī, *Taqwiyat al-īmān aur Shāh Ismāʿīl Shahīd-ke Khilāf bar-pā shūrish tārikh aur haqīqat-ke āʿīna meṁ*, al-Furqān (Lucknow), in installments from Ixi/7 (1991) to Ixi/10-12 (1993). The passages referred to here are Ixi/10-12 (1993) 79-80, 87-8.

⁸ EI, s.v. Ismāʿīl Shahīd; Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 509, note 99.

⁹ Mirzā Ḥayrāt Dihlāwī, *Ḥayāt-i ṭayyiba* (Amritsar 1933, 2nd edition).

gious establishment. Could this indicate that Ismāʿīl should be considered the person who started the reform movement before and instead of Sayyid Aḥmad?

That is precisely the contention made in a revised version of his biography which was recently published in Urdu.¹⁰ In this account the date of the composition of the *Radd al-ishrāk*, at the time of the pilgrimage in 1822-1823, is not accepted but instead antedated to circa 1798, i.e. before Sayyid Aḥmad came to Delhi for his first training. The *Taqwiyat al-īmān*, which is conventionally dated 1824, is antedated to the period before Ismāʿīl's composition of the *Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*, i.e. before the middle of 1818 at the latest.¹¹

This means that reformist doctrine as formulated in *Radd al-ishrāk* would date back to the end of the eighteenth century. According to Kāndhalawī,¹² sixteen manuscripts of this text are known to exist, and an edition of it was published in Pakistan in 1983.¹³ From a chronogram in the oldest known manuscript, it may be conjectured that the exact date of its composition is 1213/1798-1799, when Ismāʿīl Shahīd was barely twenty years old.¹⁴ It appears to be unfinished and contains only two chapters: the first dealing with *shirk*, and the second with unacceptable *bidaʿ*.¹⁵ The development of Ismāʿīl Shahīd between 1798 and 1818 is not very clear, and the dates of most of his books are not known. But in the new chronology a few landmarks emerge: his initiation by Sayyid Aḥmad is supposed to have taken place in 1812 and not in 1818, as is conventionally held; he composed a pamphlet entitled *Tanwīr al-ʿaynayn fī ithbāt rafʿ al-yadayn* before 1815. A major problem in the chronology concerns the dating of the composition of *Taqwiyat al-īmān*. According to the conventional chronology, it was written in 1824. Yet, its composition should be dated to the first half of 1818: the oldest known manuscript is dated July 1818,¹⁶ and the name of Sayyid Aḥmad is not mentioned in this text. Thus, one may infer that the *Taqwiyat al-īmān* was written before the two men became definitively associated

¹⁰ By Kāndhalawī; see note 7.

¹¹ Kāndhalawī, lix/9 (1991) 24-5; lxi/3 (1993) 28-32; Nasīm Aḥmad Faridī, *Tadhkira-i Shāh Muḥammad Ismāʿīl* (Lucknow 1988).

¹² Kāndhalawī, lxi/4-5 (1993) 65-76.

¹³ See Ismāʿīl Shahīd, *Radd al-ishrāk* (Lahore 1983, reprint 1988). I am grateful to Arthur Buehler for procuring me a copy of the 1988 reprint.

¹⁴ Faridī, *Tadhkira-i Shāh Muḥammad Ismāʿīl*; Kāndhalawī, lxi/3 (1993) 28-32.

¹⁵ Kāndhalawī, lxi/10-12 (1993) 79.

¹⁶ Ibid. lxi/7 (1993) 32-3.

in 1818. As mentioned earlier, it is usually considered to be a translation of the first chapter of the *Radd al-ishrāk* which deals with *shirk*. In reality, however, it is rather an expanded commentary on this chapter which constitutes only one fourth of the original text of the *Radd*.¹⁷ The second chapter of the *Radd al-ishrāk*, which is on *bidaʿ*,¹⁸ constituted the basis for the *Tadhkīr al-ikhwān*, written in 1834-1835, which is essentially an expanded commentary on this text in Urdu. Thus, according to the revised chronology, the reformist doctrine of the movement was codified in the *Radd al-ishrāk* and *Taqwiyat al-īmān*. These texts were written before Ismāʿīl Shahīd wrote *Ṣirāt al-mustaqīm*, and thus before Sayyid Aḥmad started his career as a religious reformer.

In addition to the *Ṣirāt al-mustaqīm*, Ismāʿīl Shahīd wrote another book which primarily focuses on Sufism. This text in Arabic, entitled *ʿAbaqāt*,¹⁹ is an exposition of the Sufi doctrine of Shāh Waliullāh. Since its date of composition remains unknown, the text allows for few conclusions if any concerning the definitive status of Sufism in the history of the movement. The *Ṣirāt al-mustaqīm*,²⁰ however, is a clearly dated manifesto which marks the start of the *ṭarīqa-i Muḥammadiyya* as an organized movement under the leadership of Sayyid Aḥmad in 1818. The contents of the tract are now rather well-known. Recent studies²¹ confirm beyond doubt the assessment of its first commentator, the British magistrate John Russell Colvin, who classified it as a Sufi work.²² The charisma of Sayyid Aḥmad as leader of the movement is based on his qualities as a mystic and a Sufi guide, in the manner of the great Delhi Naqshbandī leaders.²³ Similar to these leaders he initiated his disciples into what

¹⁷ Ibid. Ixi/6 (1993) 22-5.

¹⁸ Ibid. Ixi/10-12 (1993) 79-80, 87-90.

¹⁹ Ismāʿīl Shahīd, *ʿAbaqāt* (Karachi 1960); Urdu translation by Manāẓir Ḥasan Gilānī, *ʿAbaqāt* (Hyderabad n.d.); English translation by J.N. Jalbani, *ʿAbaqāt of Shāh Ismāʿīl Shahīd* (Delhi 1994).

²⁰ Ismāʿīl Shahīd, *Ṣirāt ul-mustaqīm*; first printed Calcutta 1822; quoted here from the Lucknow lithograph, n.d.; Urdu translations were also used (Deoband n.d. and Lahore n.d.)

²¹ Muhammad Hedayatullah, *Sayyid Ahmad. A Study on the Religious Reform Movement of Sayyid Ahmad of Rae Bareilly* (Lahore 1970); Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 499-508; Gaborieau, 'The description of Sufism'.

²² John Russell Colvin, 'Notice on the peculiar Tenets held by the followers of Syed Ahmed, taken chiefly from the "Sirat-ul-Mustaqim". a principle Treatise of that Sect, written by Moulavi Mahommed Ismail', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* I/11 (1832) 479-498.

²³ Warren Fusfeld, *The Shaping of Sufi Leadership in Delhi: The Naqshbandiyya*

were then the four main Sufi orders in India: the Chishtiyya, Qādiriyya, Naqshbandiyya and Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya. The *Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* is not just a manifesto, but also a textbook for Sufism of the kind that became fashionable among the Indian Naqshbandīs during the nineteenth century.²⁴ The whole structure of the book, shaped by the opposition between the way of Sainthood (*wilāyat*) and the way of Prophethood (*nubuwwat*), betrays inspiration from the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya. The *ṭarīqa-i Muḥammadiyya*, therefore, appears not as a new Sufi order, but merely as a reformulation of the Mujaddidiyya, with special emphasis on living in conformity with the sharia as expounded by the Prophet.

Thus, Sayyid Aḥmad's movement, in doctrine as well as in practice, did not fundamentally break away from the tradition of Shāh Waliullāh and the other great Naqshbandī Sufis of eighteenth-century Delhi. Yet, it appears from the hagiography dealing with the life of Sayyid Aḥmad,²⁵ and from the main works of Ismā'īl Shahīd, that the adherents of the movement stressed this distinct identity from the other Sufis by ostensibly avoiding practices of other Sufis which they considered contrary to the sharia.

Conversely, the other Sufis, in particular the Delhi Naqshbandīs of the school of Maḥzar Jān-i Jānān (1700-1781) considered at that time,²⁶ and still consider,²⁷ the followers of Sayyid Aḥmad as adversaries and as a distinct sect bordering on infidelity (*kufṛ*). They nicknamed them *wahhābī*, likening them to the Arabian Wahhābis who were then infamous in India for their destruction of the tombs of saints and descendants of the Prophet, particularly in Medina. Far from being a British invention, as now widely believed in India, this nickname was first applied by Indian Muslims and is attested as

Mujaddidiyya, 1750-1920 (Ph.D. Diss., Philadelphia 1981, University of Pennsylvania, unpublished).

²⁴ Arthur F. Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet. The Indian Naqshbandiyya and the Rise of the Mediating Sufi Shaykh* (University of South Carolina 1998).

²⁵ Muḥammad 'Alī, *Makhzan-i Aḥmadī* (Agra 1881).

²⁶ Warren Fusfeld, 'The Boundaries of Islam and Infidelity', in Katherine P. Ewing (ed.), *Shari'at and Ambiguity in South Asian Islam* (Berkeley 1988) 205-19.

²⁷ Abū'l-Ḥasan Zayd Fārūqī, *Mawlānā Ismā'īl Dihlawī aur Taqwīyat al-īmān* (Delhi 1984); Marc Gaborieau, 'Protestations d'un soufi indien contemporain contre trois interprétations récentes de Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī', in Marc Gaborieau, Alexandre Popovic and Thierry Zarcone (éd.), *Naqshbandis. Cheminements et situation actuelle d'un ordre mystique musulman* (Istanbul 1990) 263-4.

early as 1821.²⁸

The features which distinguished the followers of Sayyid Aḥmad from other Sufis appear from anecdotes in the hagiography, from an enumeration of *bidaʿ* in the *Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*, from discussions of *shirk* in the *Taqwīyat al-īmān*, and from the *Tadhkīr al-ikhwān*.²⁹

The first section of Chapter 2 of the *Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*³⁰ is especially devoted to innovations of deviant Sufis, i.e. of ‘the heretics who behave as Sufis’ (*ṣūfī-shiʿār mulḥid*) or ‘the idolators who behave as Sufis’ (*ṣūfī-shiʿār mushrik*), and covers denials of God’s transcendence, heretical interpretations of ontological monism (*waḥdat al-wujūd*), hair-splitting discussions on predestination, excessive reverence for one’s living *murshid*, pilgrimages to the tombs of saints, prayers for their intercession, and vows and gifts offered to the tombs of the saints. Two abuses mentioned in the literature of the movement³¹ deserve particular attention: the cult of dead saints, and the reverence for living spiritual guides.

The cult of dead saints is denounced in reformist literature in general. In the *Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* several pages are devoted to the condemnation of the ‘innovations regarding the tombs of the people of God’. We need not dwell on this point here because it is the most frequently cited in the literature about the movement; and I have dealt with it at length on the basis of the texts analyzed here,³² and in

²⁸ Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 509, 485, 498.

²⁹ Muḥammad Sulṭān Shāhābādī (or Shāhjahānpūrī), *Tadhkīr al-ikhwān* (1834) [(a continuation of the *Taqwīyat al-īmān* (first known edition, Delhi 1850, printed after *Taqwīyat al-īmān*, Multan 1987)] 55-222. One should however emphasize that there is no single book, nor any part of a book, composed during the lifetime of Sayyid Aḥmad and Ismāʿīl Shāhid which is exclusively devoted to the abuses of the Sufis; the only text I know of purporting to be a work of this kind is *al-Balāgh al-mubīn*, a pamphlet in Persian falsely attributed to Shāh Waliullāh which was in fact written after 1831 (Marc Gaborieau, ‘A Nineteenth-Century Indian “Wahhabi” Tract Against the Cult of Muslim Saints: *Al-Balāgh al-mubīn*’, in Chr. W. Troll (ed.), *Muslim Shrines in India. Their Character, History and Significance* (Delhi 1989) 198-239. In the books written before 1831 the abuses of the Sufis are always classified among other objectionable practices not linked with Sufism. However, the *Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* has a short sub-section which enumerates the most important abuses of the Sufis (Ismāʿīl Shāhid, Lucknow n.d., 49-63; Rizvi *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 509, 500-2).

³⁰ For a partial translation, see Qeyamuddin Ahmad, *The Wahhabi Movement in India* (Calcutta 1966) 6-9.

³¹ For an exhaustive inventory of abuses mentioned, see Marc Gaborieau, ‘A Nineteenth-Century Indian “Wahhabi” Tract’ 219-5.

³² Marc Gaborieau, ‘Le culte des saints musulmans en tant que rituel: controverses juridiques’, in *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*, lxxxv/1 (1994) 85-98.

connection with a more recent pamphlet.³³

Criticism of the excessive respect shown for living *murshids* is also particularly characteristic of the doctrine of the movement, at least in the South-Asian context where such criticism is not attested as far back as in other areas. Disapproval is implicit in the biography of Sayyid Aḥmad: when he went to Shāh ʿAbdu’l-ʿAzīz for his apparent initiation — his real initiation was that of an *uwaysī*, as we saw above — he ostensibly refused to meditate on the image of his guide because this was a form of idolatry.³⁴ This point is dealt with at length in the *Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*,³⁵ where Ismāʿīl Shahīd writes:

‘To show excess in revering one’s *murshid*, believing that he is like God or the Prophet, is also one of the innovations of the idolators who behave as Sufis (*ṣūfī-shiʿār mushrik*) which is nowadays generally widespread and is particularly frequent in the country of Hindustan; and even people agreeable to God have also fallen into this innovation. It is necessary to understand what is the just limit in this matter... The *murshid* is (only) a means (*wasīla*) on the way to God, as God has said (Koran 5/34)... And it is not possible to find the right path without a guide... But the guide should be one who never does or teaches anything contrary to the Law’.

This is one of the few points taken up again in the non-polemical third chapter of the *Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*, which is devoted to the description of Sufi techniques. Here, Ismāʿīl Shahīd strongly objects to the contemplation of the image of one’s Shaikh, *shughli-i barzākh*,³⁶ or *taṣawwur-i shaykh*, which is usually referred to in the technical books as *rābiʿa*, the bond joining a disciple to his master.³⁷ According to Ismāʿīl Shahīd, contemplation of the image of one’s guide is absolutely prohibited (*ḥarām*) by the sharia because it is a form of idolatry (*but-parastī*). This point aroused the most important controversy in the time of Ismāʿīl Shahīd, and after him as well.³⁸ Persons of the stature of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-1898), who accepted most of the reformist doctrine against innovations,³⁹ had difficulty in

³³ Gaborieau, ‘A Nineteenth-Century Indian “Wahhabi” Tract’.

³⁴ Muḥammad ʿAlī, *Makhzan-i Aḥmadī* 18-22; Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid* 36-7; Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 475-6.

³⁵ Ismāʿīl Shahīd (Lucknow n.d.) 53 sq.

³⁶ Ismāʿīl Shahīd (Lucknow n.d.) 130-1; Urdu translation, (Deoband n.d.) 163-4; Gaborieau, ‘The description of Sufism’.

³⁷ Michel Chodkiewicz, ‘Quelques aspects des techniques spirituelles dans la ṭarīqa naqshbandiyya’, in Marc Gaborieau, Alexandre Popovic and Thierry Zarcone (éd.), *Naqshbandis* 75-80; but see especially Fritz Meier, *Zwei Abhandlungen über die Naqshbandiyya* (Istanbul 1994); see the first essay, *Die Herzensbindung an den Meister* 17 ff.

³⁸ Gaborieau, ‘A Nineteenth-Century Indian “Wahhabi” Tract’ 214-5.

³⁹ Christian W. Troll, *Saiyid Ahmad Khan: a Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology* (Karachi 1979) 40-42.

accepting this particular reformist position. Sayyid Aḥmad Khān himself wrote a short epistle in Persian to reaffirm the lawfulness of the *rābiṭa*;⁴⁰ and the polemics on this issue continue to this day among Muslims in India and elsewhere.⁴¹

In the *Taqwiyat al-īmān* the focus is on *shirk*.⁴² In four sections, four categories of idolatry are successively described with numerous examples, viz. *fi'l-ilm* (in matters of science: e.g. attributing to created beings any knowledge of the invisible world, which belongs to God alone); *fi'l-taṣarruf* (in matters of power: attributing to created beings such as saints, or pagan deities, powers which belong to God; and in particular attributing to them the power of intercession (*shifāʿat*)); *fi'l-ibādāt* (in matters of ritual observance: performing on behalf of created beings ritual acts which are exclusively reserved for God, such as prostration or circumambulation); *fi'l-ādāt* (in matters of customs: a category which partly overlaps with the others, and lumps together a variety of customs deemed objectionable, such as practicing divination).⁴³

The *Tadhkir al-ikhwān* is longer and more loosely composed than the *Taqwiyat al-īmān*. Its central concern is the identification of *bidʿa* in seven chapters which treat the following themes: the necessity of following the Sunna of the Prophet, faith and the five pillars of Islam, predestination and practices which go against it like the use of amulets, the excellence of the early Muslims, innovations in ri-

40 Sayyid Aḥmad Khan, *Namīqa dar bayān-i masʿala-i taṣawwur-i shaykh* (Aligarh 1883); cf. Bruce Lawrence, 'Introduction' and 'Mystical and Rational Elements in the Early Religious Writings of Sayyid Ahmad Khan', in Bruce Lawrence (ed.), *The Rose and the Rock. Mystical and Rational Elements in the Intellectual History of South Asian Islam* (Durham, N.C. 1979) 9-10; 63-79.

41 Gaborieau, 'Protestations', 258; Butrus Abu-Manneh, 'Khalwa and Rābiṭa in the Khālidī suborder', in Gaborieau et al. (éd.), *Naqshbandis* 299-300.

42 Ismāʿīl Shāhid, *Taqwiyat al-īmān* (Lucknow 1956). When Sayyid Aḥmad appointed representatives (*khalīfas*) in various areas of India, he would give them a letter in which he ordered them to abstain from two things: *shirk*, associating partners with God, a term we shall from now on translate as 'idolatry', and *bidʿa* (pl. *bidaʿ*), 'innovation'. Such letters [cf. Qeyamuddin Ahmad, *The Wahhabi Movement in India* (Calcutta 1966) 39-41] represent the most condensed, yet technically precise, summary of this doctrine.

43 A fairly reliable complete English translation of this book was made more than a century ago by Mir Shahamat Ali, 'Translation of the *Takwiyat-ul-iman*, preceded by a notice of the author, Maulavi Ismaʿīl Hajji', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* xiii/1 (1852) 310-72; revised edition by M. Ashraf Darr, under the title *Support of the Faith* (Lahore 1969). The article 'Shirk' by T.P. Hughes in *A Dictionary of Islam* (London 1885; repr. Lahore 1964) 579-580 is actually a detailed summary of the *Taqwiyat al-īmān*, although the work is not mentioned by name.

tuals to do with the tombs of saints, conformity (*taqlīd*) to the legal schools viewed as an innovation, and a final chapter on miscellaneous objectionable practices such as *samāʿ*, gambling, undue pride in one's genealogy, excesses in praising people, excessive expenditure for marriages, refusal to allow widows to remarry, excessive expression of grief in mourning, extravagant spending in ordinary life.

The aim of the arguments in both texts is to demonstrate that certain beliefs and practices imply allotting to creatures attributes which only belong to God. The argumentation is based on conformity with Scripture, and does not refer to theology, a field for which Sayyid Aḥmad and his followers did not claim any special competence. Explicit theological issues only came to the foreground in the controversies about the *Taqwīyat al-īmān* which involved Ismāʿīl Shahīd after 1824. These issues had to do with the problem of whether or not God could create another world with another prophet equal to Muḥammad, and the doctrine of intercession.⁴⁴ Here as always the major concern was to maintain conformity with Scripture.

The prevalence of quotations from Scripture instead of coherent argumentation is a striking feature of the *Radd al-ishrāk*. This first book of Ismāʿīl Shahīd is rather sketchy, and consists mainly of quotations from the Koran and the Traditions.⁴⁵ The two Urdu adaptations of the original Arabic texts, *Taqwīyat al-īmān* and *Tadhkīr al-ikhwān*, are more elaborate than the *Radd al-ishrāk*. Yet, quotations from the Koran and from the Traditions still constitute the core of these books. The fourth section of the *Taqwīyat al-īmān*,⁴⁶ which deals with idolatry in ritual observances, illustrates this point. It contains six quotations from the Koran, as for example surah 22/27-29:

'Call the men to the pilgrimage; they will come on foot or on lean-flanked camels. They will come from far away to the place where they receive favours: they will mention God by name at appointed days over the cattle God gave them: "Eat these animals and feed poor and needy people with their flesh." Then let them put an end to the prohibitions [linked with the pilgrimage]. Let them circumambulate the ancient temple [i.e. the Ka'ba]'

This Koranic quotation is used to prove that pilgrimage should be to Mecca only and for the worship of God. One should not go on pilgrimage to the tombs of saints or to other places linked with their life; such places should not be considered sacred. One should not

⁴⁴ Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 517-22.

⁴⁵ Kāndhalawī, lxi/6 (1993) 22-5.

⁴⁶ Ismāʿīl Shahīd, Lahore 1956, 55-67.

circumambulate them; and no animal should be sacrificed there, since:

'All these acts are acts of idolatry. One must abstain from them. Indeed they are acts to be performed for the Creator alone: no creature is sufficiently elevated to deserve such honours'.⁴⁷

The Koranic quotations are followed by a series of six Traditions concerning shrines worshipped by the idolaters, sacrifices performed in them, and the spread of idolatry at the end of the world. The sixth and last Tradition quoted in this section, with its commentary, runs as follows:

'...in the chapter of the *Mishkāt* entitled "The Last Hour will come only when People are Wicked", it is said that the two Shaykhs [Bukhārī and Muslim] wrote: "Abū Huraira reported God's messenger as saying: 'The last hour will not come till the buttocks of the women of [the tribe] of Daws waggle around [the idol] of Dhū-i Khalasa. Dhū-i Khalasa was the idol which they worshipped in the pre-Islamic period'".⁴⁸

"Daws" is the name of a tribe that worshipped an idol called Dhū-i Khalasa: it was destroyed in the time of the Prophet. But the Prophet said that when the time of the Resurrection draws near, people will start worshipping this idol again; the women will perform the circumambulation (*tawāf*) around it; and the Prophet will see their buttocks wagging. This Tradition teaches us that circumambulation around a house other than the House of God [the Ka'ba] is idolatry; and that this is a custom of the infidels. One must absolutely abstain from such a circumambulation'.⁴⁹

These lines are obviously aimed at two Indian practices which the Wāhhābīs considered prohibited: pilgrimage to the tombs of the saints by women; and circumambulation of the tombs of the saints.

These quotations illustrate how Ismā'īl Shahīd made use of Scripture in accordance with the Indian Wāhhābī view that all proofs should come from two sources only: the Koran and the Sunna, i.e. the Traditions. In the *Širāṭ al-mustaqīm*⁵⁰ and the *Tadhkīr al-ikhwān*⁵¹ it is stressed that the Koran and Sunna have precedence over the rules of the classical law schools; and that, if any ruling from these schools contradicts one of these sources, the ruling must be abandoned. Thus, blindly following (*taqlīd*) the law schools is criticized. This prefigures by a whole generation the school of the Ahl-i ḥadīth which came to be the most radical heir to the Wāhhābīs

⁴⁷ Ismā'īl Shahīd, *ibid.* 58-9.

⁴⁸ *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ* xxvi/vi; English translation quoted from James Robson, *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*. English translation with explanatory Notes, i-iv (Lahore 1963-1965) iii, 1163.

⁴⁹ Ismā'īl Shahīd (Lahore 1956) 67.

⁵⁰ Ismā'īl Shahīd (Lucknow n.d.) 77; Rizvi, *Shāh 'Abd al-ʿAzīz* 504-5.

⁵¹ Shāhābādī, *Tadhkīr al-ikhwān* (Multan 1987) 158-62.

in the eighteen-fifties.⁵²

In fact the promoters of the movement looked upon themselves neither as theologians, nor as jurists, but as traditionists, nurtured in the schools of Shāh Walīullāh Dihlawī, and of the Yemeni Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Shawkānī (d. 1834).

According to the revisionist chronology, the beginnings of the “Wahhābī” movement do not coincide with Sayyid Aḥmad Barēlwī’s arrival on the scene. Rather, it is the *Radd al-ishrāk*, written by Ismāʿīl Shahīd in 1798, which should be considered as marking the commencement of the movement. Since the contents of this text, which aims at reforming certain beliefs and practices common among Indian Muslims and especially among Sufis, cannot be related to specific historical events or particular religious trends in India, the roots of the movement should be sought elsewhere in the Islamic world. One would naturally be inclined to look for Wahhābī roots; in particular since the Indian reformers were called Wahhābīs by their adversaries from the outset, and the British authorities and the orientalist also identified them as Wahhābīs.⁵³

This identification has been strongly resisted in present-day India and Pakistan for reasons of national pride; and many western scholars have followed suit.⁵⁴ Conversely, when I recently suggested a possible influence from the Arabian Wahhābīs on the Indian reformers,⁵⁵ this was immediately denied by a leading Indian historian of the Wahhābī movement.⁵⁶ Yet, it should be pointed out that the doctrines and actions of the Arabian Wahhābīs were well-known in Delhi.⁵⁷ Likewise, themes developed by Ismāʿīl Shahīd in the *Radd al-ishrāk* and the *Taqwīyat al-imān* have often been compared with the *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, the major work of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703-1792), the founder of Wahhābism. Some scholars⁵⁸

⁵² EI, s.v. Ahl-i ḥadīth.

⁵³ On the British side the identification was popularized by William Hunter, *Our Indian Musalmans: Are they Bound in Conscience to Rebel against the Queen?* (London 1871). Among the orientalist this identification was first formulated by T.P. Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam* (London 1885), article ‘Wahhabi’, 659-62; *Shorter EI*, s.v. *Wahhābiyya*, retained this identification. As mentioned earlier (note 43) Hughes based his article *shirk* on the *Taqwīyat al-imān*. This work, however, which is not mentioned by name, is actually used as a source on Wahhābī (i.e. Arabian and not Indian Wahhābī) theology.

⁵⁴ For a recent example, see Fusfeld, ‘The Boundaries of Islam and Infidelity’.

⁵⁵ Gaborieau, ‘A Nineteenth-Century Indian “Wahhabi” Tract’ 231-2.

⁵⁶ Qeyamuddin Ahmad, *The Wahhabi Movement in India* (Delhi 1994) 31-2.

⁵⁷ Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 190, 498, 517.

⁵⁸ Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 509; Fārūqī, *Mawlānā Ismāʿīl Dihlawī*.

have even held the view that Ismāʿīl Shahīd's tracts were directly inspired by the *Kitāb al-tawhīd*. Moreover, the vehemently polemical style of Ismāʿīl Shahīd, as well as the physical violence directed by some of his disciples against cult objects such as *taʿziyas* — replicas of the tombs of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn⁵⁹ — are more reminiscent of Wahhābī practice than of the peaceful admonitions of Shāh Waliullāh. All of this, however, does not amount to adequate proof of Wahhābī influence. One therefore feels inclined to consider another possible source of inspiration: the writings of Ibn Taymiyya.

The arguments used by Ismāʿīl Shahīd to condemn certain practices and beliefs as reprehensible are already found in the writings of Ibn Taymiyya. One even finds the objection to meditating on the image of the Shaykh.⁶⁰ J.M.S. Baljon has convincingly shown that Ibn Taymiyya's thought, which was widely discussed in India in the eighteenth century, served as the main source of inspiration for Shāh Waliullāh (1703-1762) in his formulations of criticism of the Sufis.⁶¹ At the time of Ismāʿīl Shahīd and Sayyid Aḥmad Barēlwī, Ibn Taymiyya's books were known and commented upon in Delhi.⁶² One of the scholars of this city who wrote against Ibn Taymiyya was its great *muftī*, Ṣadr al-Dīn Āzurda (1789-1868). He wrote a treatise 'in refutation of the arguments of Ibn Taymiyya and others to prove that visits to the shrines of saints and other divines are unlawful'.⁶³ In the second half of the nineteenth century the most radical inheritors of the *ṭarīqa-i Muḥammadiyya* of Sayyid Aḥmad, the Ahl-i ḥadīth, also made extensive use of Ibn Taymiyya.⁶⁴ Thus, Ismāʿīl Shahīd might be one more promoter of Ibn Taymiyya's thought in India (as digested perhaps by Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb). Yet, neither in the works of Ismāʿīl Shahīd himself nor in those of his contemporary disciples do we find any mention of Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb or Ibn Taymiyya.

Another possible source for Ismāʿīl Shahīd's ideas is the Yemeni scholar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Shawkānī (d. 1834). From the hagiography we learn that Sayyid Aḥmad and his party contacted al-

⁵⁹ Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 478.

⁶⁰ Chodkiewicz, 'Quelques aspects' 79, note 39.

⁶¹ M.S. Baljon, *Religion and Thought of Shāh Walī Allāh Dihlawī (1703-1762)* (Leiden 1986) 200; and id., 'Shah Waliullah and the Dargah', in Christian W. Troll (ed.), *Muslim Shrines in India* 195-196.

⁶² Rizvi, *Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* 190.

⁶³ See EI, s.v. Āzurda.

⁶⁴ Gaborieau, 'A Nineteenth-Century Indian "Wahhabi" Tract'.

Shawkānī when they reached Jidda in 1822 on their way to Mecca to perform the *hajj*. This they did in order to obtain from him a book of Traditions.⁶⁵ After the death of Sayyid Aḥmad, Wilāyat °Alī (1790-1852) of Patna, the latter's chief disciple in India, rushed to the Yemen to obtain an *ijāza* for Traditions which he believed would give him legitimacy to lead the movement.⁶⁶ The presumed influence of al-Shawkānī remains to be substantiated on the basis of historical and textual evidence. It would certainly explain the main features of the Barēlwī movement, notably the insistence on *ijtihād* (as opposed to *taqlīd* then prevalent in India) and the insistence on retaining a substantial Sufī component. These features are completely absent from Arabian Wahhābism proper.

The hagiography gives the impression that Ismā°il Shahīd insisted on the rejection of *taqlīd*, and had to be restrained with regard to this matter by Sayyid Aḥmad during the *jihād* in the North-West. Similarly, Sayyid Aḥmad appears to have insisted on banning meditation on the image of one's Shaykh. Ismā°il Shahīd continued this practice until his death.⁶⁷ The fact that the movement split into several branches after 1831 indicates conflicting tendencies partially rooted in the divergent views concerning these issues.⁶⁸

Indian reformers of the early nineteenth century do not oppose Sufism as such, but mainly criticize and reject certain practices and beliefs regarding living spiritual guides and dead saints. Their views are partially shaped by Naqshbandī teachings, but mainly by neo-Ḥanbalism. More recently, Arabian Wahhābī thought and perhaps al-Shawkānī's views may also have had some impact. The lines by Mawdūdī quoted above reflect a prevalent modern neo-fundamentalist view: that medieval Sufism is an obstacle to efficacious political and social reform. This view, in a sense, is a logical corollary of the political and social activist concerns of Mawdūdī and other neo-fundamentalists. Such concerns, however, were not typical of the reformers of the early nineteenth century such as Ismā°il Shahīd. As is evident from his *Ṣirāṭ al-mustaḳīm*, medieval Sufism

⁶⁵ Rizvi *Shāh °Abd al-°Azīz* 484.

⁶⁶ Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd* 300-10; Qeyamuddin Ahmad, *The Wahhabi Movement* 86.

⁶⁷ Christian W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: a Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology* (Karachi 1979) 42.

⁶⁸ Khan, *History of the Farā°idī Movement* (Dhaka 1984) 39-88, remains the best documented account of these divisions.

was still alive and intact. Thus, Fazlur Rahman's view, that the 'pre-modern' reformers were dissatisfied with the existing social and political situation,⁶⁹ is not substantiated by the case of Ismā'īl Shāhīd. O'Fahey and Radtke's argumentation against Rahman's concept of 'Neo-Sufism'⁷⁰ would seem to be borne out. Indeed, early-nineteenth-century reformers such as Ismā'īl Shāhīd and Sayyid Aḥmad cannot be credited with a realistic program of political and social reforms.⁷¹ They were first and foremost traditionists who aimed primarily at purifying Islam. They had a utopian vision of a return to Islam's pristine purity, for which their *jihād* in the North-West was a one-time vehicle, and they promoted messianic expectations which crystallized into Sayyid Aḥmad's posthumous third career as a *mahdī*.

⁶⁹ F. Rahman, *Islam* (Chicago 1979) 209-10.

⁷⁰ R. Séan O'Fahey and Bernd Radtke, 'Neo-Sufism Reconsidered', *Der Islam*, lxx (1993) 52-87.

⁷¹ In my 'Les oulémas/soufis dans l'Inde moghole: anthropologie historique de religieux musulmans', *Annales. Économies, sociétés, civilisations* v (1989) 1192 and 1200-1201, I more or less followed Fazlur Rahman. Here, I wish to restate my earlier position. A thorough examination of Sufi texts produced by Ismā'īl Shāhīd, such as *Ṣirāt al-mustaqīm*, and even supposedly political texts such as *Maṣṣab-i imāmat* (written circa 1827, Delhi n.d.), has amply shown that medieval Sufi theosophy was still present: the argumentation recently developed by O'Fahey and Radtke (see note 69 above) against the concept of 'Neo-sufism' applies also in the Indian case; see Nicole Grandin & Marc Gaborieau, 'Le renouveau confrérique (fin XVIIIe et XIXe siècle)', in Alexandre Popovic and Gilles Veinstein (éd.), *Les Voies d'Allah. Les ordres mystiques dans le monde musulman des origines à aujourd'hui* (Paris 1996) 68-83. It would therefore seem to be erroneous to locate the demise of classical Sufism in the early nineteenth century.

CHARISMATIC VERSUS SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY:
NAQSHBANDI RESPONSE TO DENIERS OF MEDIATIONAL SUFISM
IN BRITISH INDIA

ARTHUR F. BUEHLER

'Muslim shrines and tombs of Sufi Saints represent Muslim culture [and] traditions ... These Sufi Saints still rule over the hearts of Pakistanis and Muslims of other countries. With the passage of time the number of devotees has increased. The visit to shrines by millions of people every year is an abiding testimony of their absolute and undisputed sway over their followers and of their divine blessings emanating from their hallowed graves'.¹

'Ahl-i hadis ... insist strongly upon the unity of God, which ... they say has been endangered by the reverence paid by the ordinary Musalmán to Muhammad, to the Imáms and to saints; and forbid the offering of prayer to any prophet, priest or saint, even as a mediator with the Almighty. They condemn the sepulchral honours paid to holy men, and illumination of, visits to, and prostration before, their shrines, and even go so far as to destroy the domes erected over their remains. They call the rest of the Muhammadans [sic] "Mushrik", or those who associate another with God'.²

These contrasting perceptions represent two poles of authority in Sunni Islam: charismatically connecting to the Prophet Muḥammad via a spiritual genealogy on one hand and scripturally connecting to Muḥammad via transmitted religious knowledge on the other. In the context of the Indian subcontinent Sufis (Muslim mystics) and *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* (followers of the prophetic *ḥadīth*) reflect these two differing paradigms in Islam that have sharply divided Indian Muslims since the early nineteenth century. Sufi practice centers around a personal charismatic authority, usually called a *shaykh* or *pīr* (lit. elder), whom they consider a protégé of God (*walī*, lit. close to God) and therefore who can mediate between Muslims and God.³ *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*, defining their primary authority in scriptural terms, i.e., the

¹ Pakistan Tourism Development brochure, 1985

² *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Province*, 1911.

³ Indian Sufis have differing views on the extent of this mediation, hence the Deobandi and Barēlwī schools of thought in India.

Koran and Ḥadīth,⁴ assert the equality of humans before God while stressing that any Muslim can address God and consult the primary sources directly without any need of mediation.

To a large extent these two polarities of Indian Islam are the outcome of a unique process of Islamization which has resulted in a tension between the idealized Islam of Arabia and the actual realities of an Indian Islam influenced by Indian culture.⁵ An ongoing process of revitalization (*tajdīd*) of Indian Islam steers a middle path between these two extremes. Such revival movements have been critical of Indian customary practices, often identified with Hindu practices, while striving to cultivate the paradigmatic practices (*sunna*) of the Prophet in seventh-century Arabia.⁶ This revitalization process continues the original Islamization impetus, in that it seeks, among other things, to teach nominal Muslims appropriate Islamic orthopraxy and develop a more self-conscious Muslim identity.⁷ The following section provides a brief history of Islam in India and an overview of Indian Muslim revivalist currents before discussing three major revivalist/reform groups in British India: Barēlwīs, Deobandis and *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*. Their disagreements over both the extent of mediation between the believer and God and the relative importance of personal charismatic authority set the stage for the second part of the essay which explores their actual theological differences and arguments.

Most major Indian Muslim reform and revival movements began in the Panjab as a response to the indigenous development of Panjabi

⁴ For the canonical Sunni collections, compiled by the tenth century, I use “Ḥadīth” and when referring to one or several reports from these collections the term “ḥadīth” is used.

⁵ This is not to say that these polarities are unique to Indian Islam. See Mervyn Hiskett, ‘The ‘Community of Grace’ and its Opponents, the ‘Rejecters’: A Debate About Theology and Mysticism in Muslim West Africa with Special Reference to its Hausa Expression’, *African Language Studies* xvii (1980) 99-140. Certainly one crucial aspect of differing Shii and Sunni expressions of Islam involves the focus on the charismatic leadership of Shii Imams.

⁶ To some extent the tension between Indian customs and normative Arabic sharia standards is eased by the flexibility of community consensus which recognizes local customs in the form of ‘*urf*’ and ‘*adat*’ laws in addition to the sharia. In spite of this versatility many Indian Muslims have felt separated from their spiritual homeland in Mecca and Medina. Muḥammad Iqbāl (d. 1938), a well known modern Indian thinker, frequently invoked images of returning to Mecca and Medina in his writing.

⁷ In this regard *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* would be more of a reform (*iṣlāḥ*) movement, attempting to re-form Indian Islam in a radical way (in the sense of a complete reconstruction) rather than in an incremental manner.

Islam. Traditionally, the spread of Islam throughout the western Panjab has been attributed to the efforts initiated by the grand Sufi masters of the Chishtiyya and Suhrawardiyya, Bābā Farid Shakar Ganj (d. 1265) of Pakpattan, and Bahā³ ul-Haqq Zakariyyā (d. 1267) of Multan, respectively.⁸ Richard Eaton has argued that conversion resulted from a two-fold process: nomadic Jat tribes became agriculturists while simultaneously adapting to the influences of Mughal government. This enabled the families and caretakers of the deceased Sufis' tomb-shrines to control intractable Jat groups by the sixteenth century.⁹ Smaller, local shrines associated with villages or subtribes augmented these major shrines creating, by the nineteenth century, a Panjabi countryside dotted with graves of deceased holy people.

In the mind of the typical rural Panjabi, Sufi shaykhs, whether dead or alive, derive their palpable worldly authority from their closeness to an utterly transcendent and distant God. Such connections to God enable Sufis to intercede on behalf of the believer in the same way that political and social relationships and interactions in northern Indian society require the use of mediators between various levels of the social hierarchy. Communication between the spiritual and mundane realms is conceived in an identical fashion. Sharafuddin Manērī (d. 1381) states,

'... the sheikhs are kings close to the King, and their requests are acceptable to Him. All those who come to the sheikhs and bind themselves to the sheikhs attain what they desire'.¹⁰

For many Indian Muslims, shrine cults were their only contact with Islam and they did not see any need to change their dress or lifestyle to differentiate themselves from Hindus. To counter this tendency a tradition of revivalism has flourished continuously from the seventeenth century to the present day. Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1624), the founder-figure of the Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī lineage, pioneered the first major Islamic revival movement in the Indian Sub-

⁸ The British gazetteers and census takers recorded that Muslims attributed their conversions to these and other Sufi notables. Thomas Arnold in his *Preaching of Islam* (London 1913) and Murray Titus in Richard C. Martin (ed.), *Indian Islam: A Religious History of Islam in India* (London 1930), both relied upon these reports to support a counter-argument refuting the conventional European attitude that conversions in India resulted from force.

⁹ Richard M. Eaton, 'Approaches to the Study of Conversion to Islam in India', in Richard C. Martin (ed.), *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies* (Tucson 1985) 106-123. Eaton actually charts an inverse relationship between Muslim political penetration, i.e., the sword, and conversion to Islam, citing the most dramatic conversion rates in regions on the fringes of Indo-Muslim rule, Eastern Bengal and Western Panjab.

¹⁰ Sharafuddin Manērī, *The Hundred Letters*, English translation by Paul Jackson (New York 1980) 28.

continent. His agenda as a renewer of religion (*mujaddid*) involved encouraging behavior and belief modelled after that of the Prophet, the primary Muslim exemplar. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Mujaddidiyya, propagating a sharia-minded revival Sufism, had prospered in India and became an international lineage. Shāh Waliullāh (d. 1763), a Mujaddidī shaykh, continued this revivalist tradition. Both a master of the Islamic religious sciences and a Sufi, Shāh Waliullāh emphasized the study of *ḥadīth*, becoming a specialist in *ḥadīth* himself. His sons, led by the *ḥadīth* scholar Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz (d. 1824), continued Shāh Waliullāh's work, which was directly to influence most of the reform and revival groups during the British colonial period. The most obvious legacy appears in the idiom of religious polemics. By 1900 no argument justifying Sufism would be considered serious unless supported by numerous Koranic and *ḥadīth* citations, the more the better.¹¹

No one bolstered the Indian mediational type of Sufism with more scriptural citations than the erudite Aḥmad Riḍā Khān Barēlwī (d. 1921). With his thousands of legal opinions and prolific writing, Aḥmad Riḍā strove to give the predominantly rural northern Indian shrine cult legitimacy in reformist terms, that is, legitimizing its activities and world view in terms of the Koran and Ḥadīth. His followers, Barēlwīs, saw no contradiction between the reformist ideal of each Muslim behaving in conformity to the prophetic model and adherence to the beliefs and practices of a predominantly rural, shrine-centered Islam.¹² This legitimacy enabled a mediational Sufism to become increasingly popular in urban environments. It is

¹¹ This has always been the case to some degree since the tenth century but it became exaggerated in British India. In Jamāʿat ʿAlī Shāh's article, 'Ḍarūrat-i murshid', in Muḥammad Šādiq Quṣūrī (ed.) *Irshādāt-i amir-i millat* (n.p. 1983) 16-61, there are twenty-nine scriptural proofs given to justify the need for a spiritual guide. An argument frequently was clinched by having more citations than the opponent; see Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton 1982) 308. Often these Koranic and *ḥadīth* proofs were extremely strained, e.g., *Risāla-i anwār aṣ-ṣūfiyya* vii, no. 1, 16 [hereafter cited *Risāla* with volume, number, page, e.g., *Risāla* vii.1.16]. Pagination is very irregular in this journal.

¹² Aḥmad Riḍā's followers identified themselves as "Ahl-i Sunnat wa-Jamāʿat" (members of the rightly guided Sunni mainstream) but they became known to outsiders as "Barēlwīs." Since many other communities also considered themselves "Ahl-i Sunnat wa-Jamāʿat", I use Barēlwī in a non-pejorative sense. For the movement in general see Metcalf, *Islamic Revival* 296-314, and for a detailed treatment of Aḥmad Riḍā Khān and the non-Sufi aspects of his movement, see Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam & Politics in British India: Ahmad Riza Khan Bareilwi and his Movement, 1870-1920* (Delhi 1996).

this unique blend of predominantly rural shrine cults and modern urban institutions that has produced a distinctive South Asian perspective on Islam and on the practice of Sufism.

Aḥmad Riḍā formulated an unprecedented Sunni prophetology to support and enhance his mediatory version of Islam. His operating principle was to develop beliefs and customs that would elevate the status of Muḥammad and the Sufis to unprecedented heights. Instead of divine Effulgence (*fayḍ*) from God, Barēlwīs emphasized the “Muḥammadan light” (*nūr-i muḥammadī*) which had existed from the beginning of creation.¹³ In addition, they believed the Prophet to be present and observing (*ḥāḍir wa-nāẓir*) at all times and places; he could be called upon whenever needed.¹⁴ Barēlwīs, in addition, believed that Muḥammad had a comprehensive knowledge of the unknown (*‘ilm-i ghayb*).¹⁵

Given this theological background, Aḥmad Riḍā opposed Deobandis and other Muslim groups because they consciously neglected to accord Muḥammad his status as a holy superman.¹⁶ Indeed, anyone who decreased the glory of Muḥammad in any way

¹³ The idea of the Muḥammadan light was fully developed by the beginning of the tenth century; see Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill 1975) 214-15. There are numerous apparent resemblances between Aḥmad Riḍā's emphasis on the centrality of Muḥammad and his lineal descendants (*ahl-i bayt*) and Twelver Shii concepts. Aḥmad Riḍā arrived at his prophetology through devotion to Muḥammad and an ardent desire faithfully to imitate his prophetic example. Barēlwīs justified their practices and self identity, which revolved around the figure of Muḥammad, by citing Sunni sources. To the extent that Barēlwī and Shii positions overlapped it should be understood to be development from two different traditions rather than “Shii influence”. See Sanyal, *Devotional Islam* 212-16.

¹⁴ The shorthand for this belief is the expression “O Messenger!” (*vā rasūl*). In contemporary Pakistan it is not unusual to see Barēlwīs identifying themselves by wearing green buttons with this written on them. Benazir Bhutto, not generally considered a Barēlwī but a Shii, had this written on many of her campaign posters in Lahore during the 1989 elections.

¹⁵ This notion was denounced by Shāh Ismā‘īl Shahīd (d. 1831) as associating limited human knowledge with the knowledge that only God possesses (*ishrāk fi'l-‘ilm*). See Shāh Ismā‘īl Shahīd, *Radd al-ishrāk* (Lahore 1988) 20-22.

¹⁶ Aḥmad Riḍā declared any person who did not share each detail of his prophetology to be an infidel in the same fashion as a person not adhering to each article of the Muslim credal dogma (*‘aqā'id*) would be considered a non-Muslim. Aḥmad Riḍā defines numerous kinds of infidels in his *Husām al-haramayn* including those following Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the leader of the Aḥmadīs who had declared himself a prophet, and Deobandi leaders, Muḥammad Qāsim Nānawtawī, Rashid Aḥmad Gangohī, and Ashraf ‘Alī Thānawī. Aḥmad Riḍā labeled the latter three “Wahhābīs.” See Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam* 235-7. Deobandis were a group of nineteenth-century revivalist ulama who supported a Sufism devoid of what they considered non-Islamic practices. See p. 474 below.

was for Aḥmad Riḍā guilty of infidelity to Islam (*kufr*). The Deobandis and other ulama and Sufis who venerated the Prophet as a perfect but human model for human behavior, fell far short of what Aḥmad Riḍā considered proper love and adulation of the Prophet. For Barēlwīs exuberant praise of the Prophet was the touchstone of correct religious practice and belief, enabling them to legitimize both weak *ḥadīths*, if they elevated Muḥammad's stature, and innovations in practice, if they honored the Prophet.¹⁷ Barēlwīs expressed their devotion in a typically Indian manner, paralleling the practices of Indian *bhaktas* by writing love poetry, adorning holy persons with flowers, and using rose water and incense when in their holy presence — a far cry from the paradigmatic practices of Muḥammad, an Arabian prophet that *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* members used as the exclusive criterion of appropriate Islamic orthopraxy. These kinds of Indian devotional practices did not usually trouble Deobandis although such activities provoked serious clashes between Barēlwīs and *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*.

During the British Colonial period, the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* vehemently denied the institutions of Sufism and any notions of intermediaries between God and believer. *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* challenged the customary Indian Islamic ethos and associated practices, making it one of the most radical groups of Indian ulama.¹⁸ They categorically excluded all later developments in Islam,¹⁹ thereby declaring both medieval schools of jurisprudence and Sufism, institutions which had guided Muslims for a millennium, to be superfluous. Emphasizing a direct and literal interpretation of Koran and Ḥadīth, the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* believed that each Muslim could derive guidelines for ritual performance and for life situations from these original sources. Experiencing God, a Sufi goal, was for them not a proper Muslim goal. Although never very popular, this group's relatively few adherents came from the elite who did not mind that *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* ulama rejected both the traditional Indian Sunni Ḥanafī ritual observances,

¹⁷ Ibid. 348, 448. It is this mode of thinking that justified admirable innovations (sing. *bid'at ḥasana*) since it is not against general proof (*dalil 'āmm*) and leads one to the sharia and practice of the *sunna*. See Aḥmad Sa'īd, *Bi'l-fawā'id al-dābiṭa fī ithbāt al-rābiṭa* (n.p. 1875) 16-31, where visualization of the shaykh is justified as an admirable innovation. General proof in this context most likely means community consensus.

¹⁸ Metcalf, *Islamic Revival* 268-296. Unless otherwise noted I am relying on Metcalf's summary of *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* throughout in this section.

¹⁹ The *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* are forced to include the first three centuries of Islam because of their reliance on the canonical tenth-century *ḥadīth* collections.

e.g., by reciting “*āmīn*” out loud (*āmīn bi’l-jahr*) and raising their hands (*rafʿ al-yadayn*) in prayer, and the traditional practice of inculcating master-disciple relationships.²⁰

Shāh Muḥammad Ismāʿīl Shahīd (d. 1831), a nephew of Shāh ʿAbdulʿazīz (d. 1824), was the first Indian to espouse views of the group that later became known as Wahhābīs or *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*.²¹ After spending fourteen months outside of India visiting Arabia and Turkey, Ismāʿīl Shahīd finished his famous *Taqwīyat al-īmān* in 1824. It is uncertain to what extent his reform ideas actually were influenced by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb’s writings even though the reformist agenda of *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* closely resembles that of the Najdī, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792).²² After the first war of independence in 1857 the British singled out Indian “Wahhābīs” as a particularly seditious group.²³ By 1887 Muḥammad Ḥusayn, editor of a Lahore newspaper, *Ishāʿat al-sunna*, convinced the Panjab government to replace the name “Wahhābī” with “*Ahl-i Ḥadīth*”. For many Indian Muslims the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* still symbolize a non-Indian Islam in spite of later twentieth-century *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* attempts to associate their reform ideas with notable Indian Muslims such as ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq-i Muḥaddith al-Dihlawī (d. 1642), Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1624), Shāh Walīullāh (d. 1762), and Mīrzā Maḥzar-i Jānjānān (assass. 1781).²⁴

²⁰ There is no reliable information on how many people claimed to be *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* followers. According to Muḥammad Jaʿfar Thānesari’s *Tawārīkh-i ʿajībān* (Delhi 1891), there were only ten Wahhābīs in the Panjab in 1861 and by 1879 a quarter of the Muslims “were followers of Muḥammad Ismāʿīl,” cited in Abū Ḥasan Fārūqī, *Maulānā Ismāʿīl aur Taqwīyat al-īmān* (Lahore 1984) 10. According to a 1979 report conducted by the Pakistani Ministry of Religious Affairs on the number of religious schools in Pakistan, 354 were Deobandi, 267 Barēlwi, 126 *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*, and 41 Shii. There were no figures on how many students were in each school and the relationship between schools and popularity of a religious perspective is difficult to establish. See P. Lewis, *Pirs, Shrines and Pakistani Islam* (Rawalpindi 1985) 83.

²¹ The name *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* was first used in writing by Nadhīr Ḥusayn (d. 1902) in 1864.

²² This apparent connection explains why those adhering to *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* practices and doctrines have been labelled “Wahhābīs” by their opponents. One major difference between the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* and their Arab counterparts is that the latter conform in some degree to the Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence while the Indians reject the *taqlīd* of any Imam. A modern Naqshbandī response to Shāh Ismāʿīl’s thought is the late Abū Ḥasan Fārūqī’s *Maulānā Ismāʿīl aur Taqwīyat al-īmān* where he states (p. 14) that Shāh Ismāʿīl’s *Radd al-ishrāk* was taken from Muḥammad b. Abd al-Wahhāb’s work.

²³ W.W. Hunters, *The Indian Muslims* declared the Wahhābīs as enemies of the British empire, which provoked apologetic responses, e.g. Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān’s *Tarjumān-i Wahhābiyya*.

²⁴ Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Mīr Siyālkōṭī, *Tārīkh-i ahl-i ḥadīth* (Sargodha, n.d.) 273-284.

In 1867 a group of ulama founded a *Dār al-‘Ulūm* at Deoband to propagate a sharia-minded reformist Islam.²⁵ The Deobandi reformist orientation emphasized adherence of individuals to Islamic behavioral norms just as Sirhindī and his spiritual successors had been urging for the past three centuries. In contrast to the popular mediational style of Islam centered on shrine cults and annual ‘*urs*’ ceremonies, Deobandis conceived of religious leaders as teachers of Islamic religious duties and exemplars of the prophetic sunna for the common people. Although the Deobandi leadership pattern challenged the basis of the predominantly rural Sufi mediational style of religious authority, Deobandi teachers shared much in common with their non-reformist brethren. Deobandi ulama thought of themselves primarily as legal consultants (*muftīs*) while also acting as Sufi shaykhs to their students.

Deobandis specialized in formulating legal judgments (*fatāwā*) which propagated their reformist ideas and reinforced the status quo of following the legal school of Abū Ḥanīfa, the legitimacy of which was continually being contested by *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*. Through these legal decisions Deobandi ulama enacted, in a practical fashion, their dogmatic credal critique of *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* and Shiites while discouraging what they considered to be un-Islamic customs, e.g., elaborate annual death anniversary (‘*urs*, lit. marriage) celebrations at the graves of Sufis, monthly *gyārhwīn* (lit. eleventh) celebrations on the eleventh day of each Islamic month commemorating ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 1166), Sufi music assemblies (*samā‘*), special pilgrimages to Sufi shrines, and solicitations for the assistance of deceased Sufis, who could hear supplications at any time or place. Since the Barēlwīs considered all of these practices compatible with the prophetic *sunna* and the Deobandis did not, the two groups spent most of their time fighting with each other.²⁶

The biographies of these notable Indian Muslims are arranged in a continuous chain of *ḥadīth* transmission that ends with Ismā‘īl Shahīd and his successors in *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*, i.e., Muḥammad Ishāq (d. 1846) and Nadhīr Ḥusayn (d. 1902), implying the eminent Indian origin of *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*. All of these alleged forefathers of *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* reform ideas (through *ḥadīth* transmission) were famous Naqshbandī shaykhs who had emphasized a Ḥanafī sharia-minded Sufism, a conception that was diametrically opposed to *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* notions of proper Muslim practice.

²⁵ Metcalf, *Islamic Revival* 157-183. Unless otherwise noted I am relying on Metcalf’s treatment of Deobandis in this section.

²⁶ For a more comprehensive view of what Deobandi reformers considered to be un-Islamic, particularly among women, see Barbara Metcalf’s partial translation of Mawlānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānawī’s *Bihishtī zēwar, Perfecting Women* (Berkeley 1990).

One source of friction between the Deobandis and the Barēlwīs originated in their two conflicting ideas of the spiritual mentor's role: the Deobandis were educator-shaykhs and the Barēlwīs mediator-shaykhs.²⁷ For Deobandis the shaykh was an educator and an exemplar of moral character and piety, while for the Barēlwīs the shaykh was an intercessor and patron. The implications for disciples were manifold. The Deobandi approach expected the disciple to make an effort to transform his or her character; there was individual accountability in religious matters. A Deobandi disciple yielded his or her ego in loving obedience to the shaykh in addition to practicing spiritual exercises under the guidance of the spiritual guide. In contrast, Barēlwīs placed considerably less stress on the disciples' personal responsibility. Rather, a disciple's spiritual growth depended on the intercession of the shaykh, which in turn was tied to the intercession of Muḥammad. Barēlwīs considered a direct approach to God to be a sign of arrogance, an insult to Muḥammad and his heirs, in addition to being a foolish rejection of the means God had provided to become close to Him.²⁸

From the preceding discussion it may appear easy to categorize Indian Muslim identity for the Sufis and reformist/revivalist ulama in British India, e.g. *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* and Barēlwīs opposing each other on every issue with the Deobandis somewhere in the middle. Yet this framework is not the neat set of organizational categories that it seems, particularly in the case of Sufi lineages and individual Sufis. Outsiders categorized Sufi affiliations of reformist groups on the basis of the Sufi ties of their leaders. Naqshbandīs, for example, were generally associated with the *Nadwat al-Ulama* while many associated Chishtī-Šābirīs with Deobandis, and Qādirīs with Barēlwīs. Aḥmad Riḍā continually harangued against beliefs advocated by the ulama of *Nadwat al-Ulama*. Yet Jamā'at 'Alī Shāh (d. 1951), a Naqshbandī Barēlwī, studied with the first rector of *Nadwat al-Ulama* and gave a speech there on 22 September, 1907.²⁹ Deobandis,

²⁷ For further details on the historical development of these two kinds of shaykhs see Arthur F. Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet: The Indian Naqshbandiyya and the Rise of the Mediating Sufi Shaykh* (Columbia 1998).

²⁸ For an example of how a Naqshbandī shaykh, Jamā'at 'Alī Shāh (d. 1951), thought an *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* leader, Mawlawī Thanā'ullāh Amritsari, had insulted the Prophet, see Akhtar Ḥusayn, *Sirat-i amīr-i millat* (Karachi 2nd ed. 982) 256.

²⁹ *Risāla* iv.1.6-10. When Jamā'at 'Alī gave this speech he was accused of being a member of *Nadwat al-Ulama* (most likely by Barēlwīs). Two ulama who were close to Aḥmad Riḍā, Waṣī Aḥmad Šūrati and 'Abdulqādir Badā'ūnī, demonstrated their support for the

called Wahhābīs by the Barēlwīs,³⁰ often shared teachers in common with the latter. For example, many of Aḥmad Riḍā's closest followers were the students of Waṣī Aḥmad Muḥaddith Ṣūrātī, whose spiritual mentor was the Naqshbandī Shāh Faḍl Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī (d. 1895), also the mentor of the early leaders of *Nadwat al-Ulama*. Sufis who had a teacher in common did not, however, mean that there was any overarching unity of vision among them other than a desire to change the relatively powerless situation of Muslims in British India. Often Sufis found that confronting the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* to be a more urgent (and practical) matter.

The theological controversy between Indian Sufis and their detractors, in this case the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*, highlights two contrasting paradigms of religiosity within Islam. Their disputes involve differences over three interwoven elements: mediation, spiritual hierarchy, and personal charismatic authority. The first element specifies the means and ease of access the believer has to God, either with or without intercession. In the Sufi case, shaykhs, both living and deceased, are often recognized as mediators between individual Muslims and God (via Muḥammad). Applying the principle of intercession to jurisprudence, the Imams of the four Sunni law schools and the ulama following these schools mediate the interpretation of the primary Islamic scriptural sources. Other Muslims, in a practice called *taqlīd*, then follow these interpretations which have been based on analogical reasoning and community consensus. Against mediation in all its forms, *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* declare that any Muslim can ask God directly for guidance anywhere (so travelling to graves of holy persons is useless) and can consult the sources of the tradition, the Koran and Ḥadīth, without needing to rely on the interpretive mediation of a specialist.

The second element involves presuppositions of relative spiritual hierarchy or equality. Sufis assume that certain individuals are closer to God, hence the term *walī*, one who is close to God. This closeness is a function of how one is "connected" to Muḥammad, e.g., in an unbroken chain of initiation or mystical experience.³¹ In terms of spiritual hierarchy, Muḥammad is the most perfect of all humans and deserves to be venerated as such. The religious topography of shrines reflects this hierarchy since graves of these exemplary individuals

Nadwa by attending *Nadwa's* 1893 annual meeting. See Sanyal, *Devotional Islam* 217.

³⁰ Sanyal, *Devotional Islam* 240-4.

³¹ For examples of how Muslims define connectedness to the Prophet see Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet*.

become potent places to contact God. *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* assert the inherent equality of humans before God, reminding Muslims that prophets were human beings and that their importance should not be exaggerated. Thus, the notion that some Muslims are closer to God than others is rejected; graves in this perspective are only repositories of dust.

The third element defines the primary mode of religious authority as either scriptural or personal. *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* continually stress the ability of the individual to consult the primary textual sources, the Koran and Ḥadīth, and make appropriate decisions. For supplications one prays directly to God. In a contrasting perspective, Sufi shaykhs (and to a lesser extent the ulama) are the “heirs of the Prophet” and therefore can provide a similar authoritative charismatic presence as the Prophet once did. This rejuvenation of the prophetic charisma is particularly important in British India. Beginning in the eighteenth century the trio of Naqshbandī reformers, Shāh Waliūllāh (d. 1762), Mīr Dard (d. 1785), and Mīrzā Maẓhar-i Jānjānān (assass. 1781) stressed a renewed importance of the Prophet in their writing. Annemarie Schimmel suggests that this dynamic may have emerged from a nostalgia of the Prophetic “Golden Age”, the greatest of nations which now was “helpless under the blows of non-Muslim invaders”.³² As Christian missionaries began their activities, which included denigrating the venerated figure of the Prophet, Muslims reacted by drawing attention to the positive qualities of Muḥammad to compensate for the Christian glorification of Jesus. The Barēlwīs reacted the most strongly to these influences and the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* outwardly responded the least.

With two radically distinct sets of presuppositions, these two visions of Islam result in divergent interpretations of the Koran and Ḥadīth, sources from which both Indian reformist/revivalist groups justify their respective positions. In the following sections I focus on Muḥammad Ḥasan Jān Sirhindī Mujaddidī’s (d. 1946) *al-Uṣūl al-arbaʿ fī tardīd al-wahhābiyya*, a response to three principal *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* assertions.³³ Although Muḥammad Ḥasan Jān addresses the

³² Annemarie Schimmel, “The Golden Age of ‘Sincere Muḥammadans’”, in Bruce Lawrence (ed.), *The Rose and the Rock* (Durham 1979) 120.

³³ Muḥammad Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arbaʿ fī tardīd al-wahhābiyya* (Istanbul 1989 [1927]). Muḥammad Ḥasan Jān, born in Qandahar in 1862, was a descendant of Aḥmad Sirhindī and prolific writer who lived in Tanda Muḥammad Khan, Sind. Sufis use the term “Wahhābī” for those who they perceive as following religious perspective of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792). Barēlwīs would label certain Deobandīs (who identify themselves

writings of many *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* authors, he often refers to the popular treatise, *Taqwīyat al-īmān*,³⁴ by Shāh Ismāʿīl Shahīd (1779-1831) who pioneered what later became known as the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* movement in nineteenth- and twentieth-century India.³⁵ Of the vast literature generated and still being produced by these two groups, the tract by Ismāʿīl Shahīd and the one by Muḥammad Ḥasan Jān clearly and succinctly represent both sides of the reformist polemic during the British colonial period:

‘[After] Maulawī Dīn Muḥammad had translated Ismāʿīl Shahīd’s *Taqwīyat al-īmān* into Sindhi and published it as *Tawḥīd al-islām*, the Ḥanafī ‘*ulamāʾ*’ became incited against them [Ahl-i Ḥadīth] and declared war. Ḥaḍrat-i Īshān [Muḥammad Ḥasan Jān Mujaddidi] also prepared himself for action to assist the Ḥanafīs and to defend his own religion [by writing] [al-]Uṣūl [al-]Jarbaʿ on the necessity of following a particular law school (*taqlīd*) [thereby] assisting the *ahl al-sunna wa’l-jamāʿa*.’³⁶

By positing God in sharp ontological relief to human beings, Ismāʿīl Shahīd declares that certain types of veneration should be reserved for God alone. Ismāʿīl Shahīd considers acts of prostration, proceeding to a distant shrine (other than the Kaʿba) in the dress of a pilgrim, circumambulating shrines, calling out the name of an individual as a recollection (*dhikr*) exercise, covering the grave with a sheet of cloth, uttering prayers at the threshold of the shrine, kissing stones at the shrine, being an attendant at the shrine, considering the water of the shrine to be blessed by the deceased person’s presence,

as supporters of some type of Sufism) “Wahhābīs” because these Deobandis allegedly did not sufficiently honor both the Prophet and the graves of pious individuals. In *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* polemics, Sufis are often called polytheists.

³⁴ *Taqwīyat al-īmān*, originally a commentary on the first chapter of Shah Ismāʿīl’s Arabic *Radd al-ishrāk* (written between 1799 and 1804), was first written before 1818 and published in Urdu by 1826 with the first English translation by Mīr Shahamat ‘Alī published in 1852. See ‘*Translation of the Takwīyat-ul-Iman* (sic) preceded by a Notice of the Author, Maulavi Isma‘il Hajji’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* xiii (1852) 310-372, and a later revised and edited version, *Support of the Faith*, ed. M. Ashraf Darr (Lahore 1974 [1969]). My edition of *Radd al-ishrāk* is only a list of numbered citations from the Koran and *ḥadīth* under subject headings. Nūr al-Ḥasan Rashīd Kāndhalawī is currently revising the chronology of *Taqwīyat al-īmān* and Shāh Ismāʿīl. See his sequential article in *Al-Furqan* (Lucknow), March, 1992-October, 1993.

³⁵ For additional detail on *Taqwīyat al-īmān* and its author, see the contribution by Marc Gaborieau to the present volume.

³⁶ ‘Abdullāh Jān, *Muʿnis al-mukhlīṣīn* (Karachi 1947) 201-202. This is a biography written by his eldest son. Prior to this passage the author states how the deniers of *taqlīd* (*ghayr al-muqallidān*) had infiltrated into the Sind from Panjab and Hindustan. In terms of the dynamics of Muslim revitalization and Sufi–*Ahl-i Ḥadīth* polemic the Panjab, Sind, and most of northern India were interconnected.

and walking backwards when leaving the shrine (a custom of respect where it is an affront to turn one's back on another person) to be examples of associating others than God in worship (*al-ishrāk fi'l-ibāda*).³⁷ These examples are clearly aimed at the popular shrine cults that are a prominent feature of Indian Islam. In addition, Ismā'īl Shahīd also mentions two kinds of "idolatry", making an image in the shape of one of God's creatures and making monuments which become objects of worship, e.g., tombs, temples, *imāmbāras* (where Shiites celebrate Muḥarram and keep their ritual implements), and sitting places of Sufi shaykhs.³⁸

Closely associated with these practices are habits of respecting others in a way that only God should be honored (*al-ishrāk fi'l-ādār*), e.g. swearing an oath in the name of the Prophet, °Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, Sufi shaykhs, or by means of their tombs instead of making vows only to God.³⁹ Instead of recognizing God as the sole and ultimate bestower of blessings on His creation, Ismā'īl Shahīd notes that people associate other humans with God by naming their children after those whom they invoke. Thus, one finds names as °Abdunnabī (servant of the Prophet instead of °Abdullāh, servant of God), Imām Bakhsh or Pīr Bakhsh (granted by the Imam or the Sufi pīr), and even Gangā or Sitalā Bakhsh (granted by Ganga or Sitalā [Hindu deities]).⁴⁰

For Ḥasan Jān, Ismā'īl Shahīd's perspective directly insults the holy Prophet. Refuting *Taqwiyat al-imān*, he begins with a Koranic verse that highlights a more immanent notion of God, 'Whoever glorifies the signs (*sha'ā'ir*) [of religion] of God; it is from devotion (*taqwā*) of the hearts' (surah 22/32).⁴¹ According to Shāh Waliullāh (d. 1762) these *sha'ā'ir* of God come from the love of the Koran, Muḥammad, the Ka'ba, and prayer because they all are connected (*muntasab*) with God; protégés of God (*awliyā'*) would also be included.⁴² Indeed, to glorify Muḥammad and to praise God and to

³⁷ Ismā'īl Shahīd, *Support of the Faith* 9-10.

³⁸ Ibid. 55-56.

³⁹ Ibid. 11, 78-79.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 11, 64. Many other Indian customs contrary to strict notions of the sharia are noted. See Ibid. 67-68. Muslims who engage in such practices are guilty of *shirk* because they 'try to set up a new *shar'* for themselves'. See ibid. 68.

⁴¹ Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arba'* 10. Given the context of this verse and other passages using this term, *sha'ā'ir* has been often interpreted as the rites and places in the pilgrimage ritual. Ḥasan Jān is aware of the Koranic passage (2/158) stating that Ṣafā and Marwa are some of the *sha'ā'ir* while realizing that this allows for other interpretive possibilities.

⁴² Cited without page number, ibid. 11.

honor the descendants of the Prophet and pious individuals is to praise Muḥammad which in turn glorifies God because Muḥammad is the beloved of God.⁴³ Here is a much more interconnected and inclusive notion of religious authority that bridges the transcendent and immanent aspects of the divinity.⁴⁴

Accusing the Najdīs of treating the Prophet without proper manners,⁴⁵ Ḥasan Jān declares that it is religiously incumbent (*fard*) to show the proper spiritual etiquette (*adab*) toward the Prophet until the Last Day. He cites, ‘O believers do not say [to the Prophet] “Listen to us” but say “Look upon us” and listen [to the Prophet]’ (Koran 2/104) to prove his point, concluding that anyone who does not show proper consideration for the Prophet is an infidel.⁴⁶ Later in the discussion Ḥasan Jān mentions how the Wāḥḥābīs had destroyed the holy places that remind people of Muḥammad, the Companions, and their families.⁴⁷ His son, ‘Abdullāh Jān, recounts his father’s reactions:

‘When the Najdīs had gained control of the Ḥijāz and he [Ḥasan Jān] heard about their oppression, [e.g.], bloodshed, killing people plundering Muslims’ property, making infidels of Muslims, destruction of holy places, and leveling of graves and domes, he became very sad ... [Later] he heard about the demolition of the green dome of Medina’s master [Muḥammad], may God bless him and grant him salvation. Becoming unsettled and restless, he called together all the notables of Sind at Shikarpur in order to protect the Prophet’s tomb ... An urgent telegram of protest was sent to the King of Najd, Ibn Sa‘ūd, on behalf of all the Sindi Muslims saying, “All Muslims have become unsettled and restless ... from this news. I hope that the King of Ḥijāz, having felt the fury of Muslims, does not strike their window of patience with the stone of carelessness”. The next day an answer arrived from the King saying, “... We have not destroyed the Prophet’s tomb nor shall we’.⁴⁸

Nonetheless, this destruction of holy places is still, even today, a vivid memory for many Indian Muslims who believe that if it had

⁴³ Ibid. This is justified on the basis of Koran 49/1 where God and Muḥammad are mentioned together: ‘Do not give yourselves precedence in the presence of God and His messenger’.

⁴⁴ Cf. the *ḥadīth*, ‘Whoever has seen me has seen God (*al-ḥaqq*)’. which is in the *ḥadīth* collections of both al-Bukhārī and Muslim. See Badī‘uzzamān-i Furūzānfar, *Aḥādīth-i Mathnawī* (Teheran 3rd ed. 1983) 63.

⁴⁵ Najdī, like Wāḥḥābī, refers to the non-Indian origin of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥḥāb’s birthplace, Najd, in present-day Saudi Arabia. One inference of such labels is that the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* are advocating an Arab version of Islam.

⁴⁶ Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arba‘* 15. This Koranic passage refers to non-Muslims who would insult the Prophet by addressing him with the former greeting.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 21.

⁴⁸ ‘Abdullāh Jān, *Mu’nis al-mukhlīṣin* 202.

not been for massive international protests the Wahhābīs would have destroyed the Prophet's tomb.

Although it is not religiously incumbent upon Muslims performing the pilgrimage, almost all if not all Indian Muslims travelling to Mecca visit the Prophet's tomb in Medina. Yet Ḥasan Jān accuses his opponents of saying that it is *shirk* to travel to Muḥammad's grave.⁴⁹ The major issue here does not involve travelling to the grave but what one does after arriving at the Prophet's grave, i.e., expecting Muḥammad to intercede with God when one supplicates God, and that it will be accepted because it is performed at the Prophet's grave.⁵⁰

From the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* point of view, this is *shirk* since only God can grant one's supplications and since He is omnipresent and can forgive anywhere then there is no need to go to a special place. Ḥasan Jān cites two Koranic passages stating that if Muḥammad accepts forgiveness then God accepts it. 'If they had only come to you and asked God's forgiveness and asked forgiveness of the messenger when they had wronged themselves' (Koran 4/64) and 'Those who swear allegiance to you [Muhammad] actually swear allegiance to God. God's hand is over their hands' (Koran 48/10).⁵¹ Sufis posit a Muḥammad very close to God who can intercede for Muslims by virtue of his special prophetic connection with God. The *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* flatly denies this practice since one should directly ask help from God.

Asking help from God by means of intermediaries of God

⁴⁹ Ibid. 16. Ḥasan Jān reminds his readers that ulama have declared it praiseworthy (*mustahabb*) to visit places associated with Muḥammad, e.g., Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 855) kissed the pulpit and tomb of Muḥammad to receive grace (*baraka*). Mihr 'Alī Shāh (d. 1937) of the Chishtiyya-Nizāmiyya supported visiting the Prophet's grave with five *ḥadīths* in a longer discussion refuting the Wahhābīs. See Fayḍ Aḥmad, *Mihr-i munir* (Lahore 1987) 260-261.

⁵⁰ Cf. the sound *ḥadīth*, "My Intercession becomes mandatory for all who visit my grave" in Al-Ghazālī, *The Remembrance of Death and the Afterlife*, trans. T.J. Winter (Cambridge 1989) 113. Also mentioned by Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arba'* 51. One interpretive issue here is whether this is a "generic" intercession for any supplication up to and including intercession on the Day of Judgment or if intercession is restricted only to the Day of Judgment.

⁵¹ Ibid., 16-17. According to Ḥasan Jān, the Wahhābīs say that verse 4/64 only applies to the time when Muḥammad was alive. His response is that the "when" (*idh*) indicates no specific time and therefore is still valid and will continue to be so until the Day of Judgment. This difference hinges on two different presuppositions: *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* declare that the dead are dust while the Sufis recognize the living and active souls (sing. *rūh*) of prophets and pious Muslims after death. The latter verse (48/10) is the Koranic justification for Sufi initiation (*bay'a*) which is modelled upon the Companions performing *bay'a* at al-Ḥudaybiya in 628.

(*tawassul*, *istighātha*), typically prophets or protégés of God (*awliyāʾ*),⁵² is firmly rejected by Ismāʿīl Shahīd who refers to the Koranic passages: ‘Do not invoke [anyone] other than God for that which cannot benefit you nor harm you’ (Koran 10/106); ‘Say [to them O Muḥammad]: It is not in my power to harm you or to benefit you ... no one can protect me from God, nor can I find any refuge other than Him’ (Koran 72/21-22).⁵³ Considering anyone an intercessor with God is infidelity and *shirk* because those who supplicate to humans in times of need attribute omnipresence and the power of controlling the universe to others than God even if the person invoked is considered a servant of God.⁵⁴ Ismāʿīl Shahīd labels the association of the supernatural power of God with humans *al-ishrāk fiʾl-taṣarruf*.

In response, Ḥasan Jān cites a verse (Koran 79/4-5) about the Day of Judgment: ‘the angels preceding [the souls of the believers to Paradise] and those who govern the event (*mudabbirāt*)’, along with al-Bayḍāwī’s (d. ca. 1286) Koran commentary which equates *mudabbirāt* with angels and pious souls.⁵⁵ From this Ḥasan Jān reasons that the source (*ʿayn*) of supernatural power (*taṣarruf*) is in the executed plan (*tadbīr*) originating in the world of divine command (*ʿālam al-amr*).⁵⁶ Incorporate souls in the world of divine command, e.g., angels and jinns, have the tangible ability to exercise supernatural power in the visible world with God’s permission as evidenced in the Koran.⁵⁷ There are invisible working forces originating in the mundane sphere like air and wind so one should not deny the invisible supernatural power of prophets’ souls nor those of God’s protégés.

The argument at this point is inextricably linked with the issue of whether deceased prophets and *awliyāʾ* are considered dead or alive.

⁵² Also the Imams of the four schools of jurisprudence are considered to be intercessors on the Judgment Day as are jurisconsults (*fuqahāʾ*) who themselves have reached perfection can help others reach perfection (*kāmil wa-mukammil*). See Ibid., 79-80 and the discussion p. 487 below.

⁵³ Ismāʿīl Shahīd, *Support of the Faith* 34-35. He also cites Koran 10/18; 9/31; 19/93-95; 34/22-23. Ismāʿīl Shahīd concludes that since there is no intercession except by God’s permission anyway, one should go directly to God. Therefore there is no need for intercession.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 5.

⁵⁵ Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arbaʿ* 46.

⁵⁶ The world of divine command is but one level in a multi-leveled Naqshbandi cosmology. See Buehler, *Sufi Heirs of the Prophets*.

⁵⁷ Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arbaʿ* 46. He cites the example of Salomon and his activities with jinns (Koran 34/12-13).

Indeed, this matter continually arises in all phases of the debate because Sufis assume that human souls of the prophets and pious ones are very much alive.⁵⁸ Ḥasan Jān asks if there are no live souls (sing. *rūḥ*) after death then who answers the angels of death and who gets punished? Why are there so many *ḥadīths* explaining how to address dead persons?⁵⁹ The accounts of Muhammad's heavenly journey (*mi'raj*), where he is reported to have met former prophets, clearly show that the souls of the prophets are still alive. Once this is established, the souls of the Prophet's heirs, who Sufis often designate as *awliyā'*, are also considered alive.⁶⁰

Having determined that there are live souls, Ḥasan Jān declares that the souls of the felicitous ones (*su'adā'*) in the world of divine command are closer to the sources of divine Effulgence (*fuyūd wa-barakāt*) than when they were alive since they are no longer encumbered by the four elements of their bodies. Deceased holy persons therefore have considerably more power (*quwwa*) to assist others and mediate.⁶¹ This belief parallels the popular community consensus (*ijmā'*) that the Prophet has the power to intercede with God concerning affairs of human beings. Annemarie Schimmel cites a passage that confirms the Prophet's intercession on the Last Day and that remains almost unchanged in wording from one of the oldest collections of *ḥadīth*,

'Then He says: "Oh Muḥammad, lift your head, ask, and you will be given; intercede, and

⁵⁸ For example, according to Ḥasan Jān, the Wahhābis say that one could glorify Muḥammad only during the Prophet's lifetime and after that he should not be glorified nor asked for help. Ibid. 15.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 28. See al-Ghazālī, *The Remembrance of Death* 111-120. One poignant affirmation of the efficacy of addressing the Prophet is a dream vision recorded by al-Ghazālī, 'Those people who come to you and greet you [Muḥammad], do you hear their greetings?' 'Yes,' he said, 'and I return them'. Ibid. 114.

⁶⁰ This is in accordance with the *ḥadīth*, "The '*ulamā'*' are to my people as the prophets were to the sons of Israel." ('*ulamā' ummatī ka-anbiyā' banī Isrā'il*'). — For Naqshbandīs, the true '*ulamā'*' are those who have both the outer religious knowledge of the religious scholars and the inner knowledge of Sufis. It is this reasoning process, making analogies from prophetic examples to those of the "heirs of the prophets" that makes it necessary for *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* to severely limit Muḥammad's ontological status and power to that of an ordinary human. Their Sufi and non-Sufi opponents see this not only as an error but, even worse, as an insult to the Prophet.

⁶¹ Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arba'* 27. Not all Naqshbandīs agree with this. Logically, if the *faqīd* from a dead and live *pīr* were equal, then all the residents of Medina from the time of the Prophet until now would have the same spiritual rank as the Companions and would not require companionship (*ṣuḥba*) with protégés of God. See Qādī Thanā'ullāh Pānīpatī, *Irshād al-ṭālibīn* (Lahore n.d.) 25.

you will be granted [what you ask]!” I lift my head and say: “O Lord, *ummatī, ummatī*: my community, my community!”⁶²

From this statement it is logical to expect the Prophet’s intercession in other matters before the Day of Judgment, especially if one visits his grave, e.g. ‘Whoever visits my grave will be given intercession’. There are numerous examples of Muslims asking Muḥammad for something and receiving a reply in a dream.⁶³ By the ninth century Sufi shaykhs also had roles as intercessors. The shaykh, like the Prophet, had become an interface (*barzakh*) of two worlds between the Creator and the created.

Wakīl Aḥmad Sikandarpūrī (d. 1904-5), a prolific Indian Naqshbandī writer, explicates how this intercession occurs by instructing people the correct method of supplicating God. His instructions clarify the relationships of God, the Prophet, and protégés of God for the person actually supplicating. In this process he refutes misconceptions of intercession, both of the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* who conceive of this as worship of other than God, and of other Muslims who might mistakenly think that the Sufi himself is the causal agent.

Wakīl Aḥmad explains that after passing away, the prophets and protégés of God can still listen and see as well as when they were alive. Thus, when someone calls out ‘O messenger of God!’ or ‘O ‘Abd al-Qādir!’ this is the way of intercession (*tawassul aur shafā‘at*). Since after death no one except God has supernatural power (*taṣarruf*), people addressing prophets and *awliyā’* actually are asking for God’s help by means of an intermediary who relays the messages of the believers to God.⁶⁴

Explaining how to actually practice intercession with prophets and protégés of God, Wakīl Aḥmad quotes Ibn al-Ḥājj’s *Madkhal*:

‘For asking help from prophets of God ... set out with the intention of visiting their blessed graves. At the tomb when lights appear, act in a humble manner and with presence of heart eliminate all thoughts from the heart. Then praise God, send praise (*durūd*) for the person in the grave, bless his Companions (May God be pleased with them) [and] bless their Successors. Then [with the thought of] God giving success to one’s needs, establish a means of connecting (*wasila banā‘iyya*) with the prophet and ask for help from him while wanting the need fulfilled, making certain that in this affair that from the prophet’s auspiciousness (*barakat*) what

⁶² Tor Andrae, *Die person Muḥammads in lehre und glaupe seiner gemeinde* (Stockholm 1918) 236-38. A slightly different wording is found in Asad b. Mūsā, *Kitāb al-zuhd*, ed. R.G. Khoury (Wiesbaden 1976) 73-76. Cited in Schimmel, *And Muḥammad is His Messenger* 85 [brackets are in original text].

⁶³ Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arba‘* 34 and al-Ghazālī, *The Remembrance of Death* 156-159.

⁶⁴ Wakīl Aḥmad Sikandarpūrī, *Wasila-i jalila* (Lucknow 1883-4) 20.

is needed will be provided ... The person who cannot arrive at the prophet's tomb should first greet the prophet and explain his needs that God Almighty will accomplish. When you go to the protégés of God tombs to ask for help (*istimdād*) first request help by means of That Presence [Muḥammad] (God bless him and grant him peace). [Second], request help by means of the person in the grave and perform a supplication (*duʿāʾ*) for oneself, one's parents, the shaykhs, the relatives of those in the graves, and living and dead Muslims. Then make your request'.⁶⁵

The mediatory paradigm assumes that all assistance is from God but believing Muslims can "connect" to God and access His divine assistance via prophets and heirs of prophets, Sufis, whether they are dead or alive. This mediation is clearly differentiated from worship; to want help is one thing and to worship is another. Worshipping idols cannot be compared to intercession according to Wakīl Aḥmad because worship is totally distinct from entrusting someone to recommend them or their request to God.⁶⁶

Aside from *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* who reject even the existence of tombs, there are many differing views concerning the religious legitimacy of supplicating to deceased Sufis at their tombs. Some declare that one can only go to prophets' tombs to request assistance.⁶⁷ ʿAbdulḥaqq al-Dihlawī (d. 1642) declared that supplicating without mentioning either Muḥammad or other prophets is disapproved (*makrūh*).⁶⁸ The general consensus among Indian Sufis has been that since some degree of shaykh's mediation with God is necessary for Sufi practice one can also ask the protégés of God to act as intercessors with God for other needs.

The Indian *Ahl-i Ḥadīth*, labeled "non-conformists", (*ghayr muqallid*) by their fellow Ḥanafī Muslims, reject any authority of the established Sunni schools of jurisprudence. Instead of blindly accepting the authority of the founder-figures of these schools, commonly called leaders or Imams, the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* urges Muslims to consult the primary sources, the Koran and *Ḥadīth*. In cases where

⁶⁵ Cited without page references by Sikandarpūrī, *Wasīla* 22-23. Although only explicitly stated once in this passage, the prophet mentioned here would be generally understood as the Prophet Muḥammad. Presumably this passage comes from Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥājj al-ʿAbdārī, *al-Madkhal*; see e.g. the edition Beirut 1972, iv vols.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 24-26.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 32. Qāḍī Thanāʾ-ullāh Pānīpatī (d. 1810) a well known Naqshbandī shaykh, prohibited the practices of prostration, circumambulation, giving offerings, and supplicating for one's needs at graves (if the person thought the deceased is directly responsible for assistance). See his *Mā lā budda minhu* (Multan 1956) 70-71.

⁶⁸ Cited in Sikandarpūrī, *Wasīla* 34.

these authorities are silent, *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* permits a much more flexible independent thinking (*ijtihād*) than the restrictive use of analogy (*qiyās*) practices by the medieval Sunni schools. For most Indian Sunnis this was a revolutionary new formulation of religious practice. Despite the differences in religious perspectives and customs, Indian Sunnis came together harmoniously in communal prayer and in many other common ritual practices according to the guidelines of the Ḥanafī school. Indeed, the vast majority of the Indian Sunni community formulated their Ḥanafī Muslim identity on the basis of following the guidance of Abū Ḥanīfa. Many considered the *ghayr muqallid* notion as a foreign Arab intrusion. It is no surprise that Ismāʿīl Shahīd did not discuss his opposition to *taqlīd* in his popular *Taqwīyat al-īmān*.⁶⁹

Ḥasan Jān responds to his opponents, who accuse those following anyone except God and the Prophet of *shirk* and innovation, with the Koranic verse, 'O believers! Obey God and obey the messenger and those of you who are in authority (*ulū'l-amr*)' (Koran 4/59).⁷⁰ Interpreting the meaning of *ulū'l-amr* as '*ulamā*' and those who are qualified to make independent judgments on legal and theological matters (*mujtahidūn*) which include the four Imams of the law schools, he underlines God's order making it a religious obligation to obey these authorities. This discussion ties in with the verse, 'If they had referred it to the messenger and to those who are in authority (*ulū'l-amr*) then those who had thought out (*yastanbiṭū*) the matter would have known it' (Koran 4/83). Ḥasan Jān focuses on the meaning of *yastanbiṭū*, the science of deducing legal decisions from the Koran and *ḥadīth* using analogy, which is the sole domain of the religious specialists (*ulū'l-amr*) described previously.⁷¹ Both Ismāʿīl Shahīd and Ḥasan Jān mention the *ḥadīth*, '[Religious] knowledge is three-fold: unambiguous Koranic verse (*āya muḥkama*), established practice of the Prophet (*sunna qāʾima*), and equivalent religious ob-

⁶⁹ There is a section in the second part of his *Radd al-ishrāk*, 'Opposing the innovations of *taqlīd*', 121-124.

⁷⁰ Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arbaʿ* 76-77. Ḥasan Jān also discusses the necessity of following one of the schools of jurisprudence in his *Tarīq al-najāt* (Istanbul 1988 [1931]) 26-31. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505) defines the *ulū'l-amr* as jurisconsults (*fuqahāʾ*), *ibid*. Ismāʿīl Shahīd cites this verse (4/59) in its entirety, adding 'If you dispute any matter refer it to God and the messenger, if you believe in God and the Last Day. That is better [for you] and better in the long run'; Ismāʿīl Shahīd, *Radd al-ishrāk* 121.

⁷¹ Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arbaʿ* 77.

ligation (*farīda* ^c*ādila*).⁷² °Abdulḥaqq al-Dihlawī declares the latter to be those legal judgments derived by community consensus and analogy which are therefore equivalent to the Koran and prophetic practice which makes *taqlīd* of the four schools of law a religious obligation for Muslims.⁷³

The idea of following others (who are presumed to be more knowledgeable) is constantly stressed to justify the practice of *taqlīd*, e.g. ‘Follow the path of those who turn towards Me’ (Koran 31/15); ‘[Whoever] follows other than that of the path of the believers We shall leave him to that which he has chosen and shall subject him to Hell’ (Koran 4/115).⁷⁴ The argument here, based upon these verses and the subsequent Koran exegesis, focuses on conforming to the community consensus (*ijmā*^c) which has been following the four Imams “since the time of the blessing of the Koran to our time”.⁷⁵ Ḥasan Jān then quotes (in Arabic) the exegesis of al-Bayḍāwī on these verses:

‘... The verse proves the prohibition of going against the consensus of the community (*ijmā*^c). If following other than the believers’ path is prohibited then following their path is a religious obligation’.⁷⁶

Summarizing his argument, Ḥasan Jān states:

‘They have written that following the views of the *‘ulamā*’ and the pious ones of the community (*taqlīd*) is always religiously incumbent’.⁷⁷

Imitating the precedents of medieval jurisconsults (*taqlīd*) also allows the four Imams of the medieval schools of jurisprudence to intercede for Muslims on the Judgment Day. Each person who is perfect and perfection bestowing (*kāmil wa-mukammil*) will be able to intercede for his followers. °Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha^crānī (d. 1566) states:

‘All of the Sufis and jurisconsults intercede for their followers. They notice each one of their followers when his soul ascends, when Munkar and Nakīr question him, [what happens on] the Day of Resurrection, the reckoning of one’s deeds, the traverse over the gulf of Hell, and never ignore [his plight] in the afterlife. If the Sufi shaykhs look after their followers and disciples in all the conditions and difficulties in the world and afterlife, then how much more so will the striving Imams (*al-a’imma al-mujtahidīn*) of the schools who are the pegs (*awṭād*) of the earth and pegs of the religion through which the Lawgiver safeguards the people ... So in *taqlīd*

⁷² Ibid. 78; and Ismā‘īl Shahīd, *Radd al-ishrāk* 122.

⁷³ Ḥasan Jān, *al-Uṣūl al-arba*^c 78.

⁷⁴ Ibid. 80.

⁷⁵ Ibid. 79. The *ḥadīth*, ‘My community will not agree on error’, is also quoted.

⁷⁶ Ibid. 80-81.

⁷⁷ Ibid. 81.

follow whichever Imam you wish'.⁷⁸

Legal mediation in this life sets the precedent for intercession later, much in the same way as the Sufi protégés of God function for their disciples which brings to mind the alleged *ḥadīth*, 'The ulama are the heirs of the prophets'.⁷⁹

In spite of the apparent differences detailed in this essay, there are common concerns shared by groups even as divergent as *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* and Barēlwī Sufis. Reform and revivalist groups of British India, for example, would agree on the necessity of Muslims conforming to the sunna and the benefits of studying *ḥadīth*. Yet how one interprets the implications and boundaries of sunna and *ḥadīth* relates directly to whether one's primary authority for Islamic behavior is charismatic or scriptural. For example, Sufis relate knowledge of *ḥadīth* with companionship of a spiritual mentor, a notion qualitatively different from *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* conceptions of independent *ḥadīth* learning. Companionship with the shaykh, even when teaching *ḥadīth*, is experienced as actually being in the presence of the Prophet himself. Mirzā Jānjanān (assass. 1781), a prominent Indian Naqshbandī, relates:

'During Ḥaḍrat Hājī Muḥammad Afḍal's (May God have mercy upon him) *ḥadīth* lesson I used to acquire the presence (*ḥudūr*) of the Prophet's connection (*nisbat*). Many lights and blessing (*barakat*) used to manifest themselves. Essentially I used to be in companionship (*ṣuḥbat*) with God's messenger. During this time I experienced the prophetic spiritual attention (*tawajjuh*) and spiritual countenance (*laṭāfat*). It was splendid from its perfect prophetic connection (*nisbat*), expansive, and full of light. The meaning of 'The religious scholars are the heirs of the prophets' became clear'.⁸⁰

In contrast, *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* continually stress the ability of the individual to consult the primary textual sources, the Koran and Ḥadīth, and make appropriate decisions without any mediation of a jurisconsult or shaykh. Sufi shaykhs (and to a lesser extent the ulama) are the "heirs of the Prophet" and therefore can provide a similar authoritative charismatic presence as the Prophet once did. This rejuvenation of the prophetic charisma is particularly important considering later generations' increasing distance from the "Golden Age" when the Prophet was living in Arabia. Ironically, the *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* have the same goal, i.e. of symbolically returning to early Is-

⁷⁸ Cited in *ibid.* 80.

⁷⁹ For a brief discussion of this *ḥadīth*, see Furūzānfar, *Aḥādīth* 82.

⁸⁰ Ghulām 'Alī Shāh, *Maqāmāt-i maḡharī* 287-88.

lam. They take a dim view of the charismatic dimension of Islam because they interpret these kind of beliefs and practices as reprehensible innovations which defile the pristine, pure Islam of the Prophet's time. For them it is these charismatic practices that actually keep Muslims away from "true Islam" by involving Muslims in the only unforgivable sin, "idolatry" or associating others with God (*shirk*).⁸¹

The sets of polarities addressed in this essay can be conceptualized ultimately as issues revolving around the Prophet and the prophetic period of history. Muslims are quite aware of their increasing temporal distance from the historically central event of Muḥammad's prophetic mission on earth. This is further complicated by Indian Muslims' spatial distance from the holy sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina, the geographical *axis mundi* where Muḥammad lived most of his life. *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* access prophetic time by symbolically attempting to clear away or even obliterate all vestiges of practices that symbolically and literally block their access to the paradigmatic Arab practices of Muḥammad and his Companions. As the graves and holy places were leveled in Arabia, *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* seek to eliminate both spiritual hierarchy involving mediators between God and humans and non-Arab innovations. In this fashion they symbolically return to the prophetic time when Muslims realized they were close enough to God to call upon Him without mediators and without elaborate domed tombs.

Indian Sufis seek to experience the prophetic reality through human contact with heirs of the Prophet. A sharia-minded revivalist Sufi shaykh in British India, as an heir of the Prophet, was expected to be the living embodiment of the exemplary model of the Prophet which brought blessing and benefit to the Muslim community. That is, the existence of an heir of the prophet facilitated bringing Muḥammad's charismatic presence into direct contact with Muslims who venerated the Prophet. Among Deobandis, Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī (d. 1905) taught his disciples to love and emulate him, stressing the need for an affinity (*munāsabat*) in the heart between the spiritual mentor and disciple. Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī's disciples compared their shaykh's speech to that of Muḥammad, while Muḥammad Qāsim Nānawtawī's (d. 1877) contemporaries continually compared him to the Prophet.⁸²

⁸¹ They cite Koran 4/48.

⁸² Metcalf, *Islamic Revival* 174, 166.

Although at some level these apparent differences between *Ahl-i Ḥadīth* and Sufis resolve themselves somewhat in a common goal, there do exist at least two conflicting paradigms of Islamic practice which have been in tension long before the nineteenth century. One is reminded of the alleged *ḥadīth*, ‘Differences in my community are a blessing’, for these outward theological strains fuel revival movements that enliven Islam, forcing Muslims to consciously consider their individual practices. Also, for many Muslims the “Sufi versus orthodoxy” debate supposedly reconciled by Abū Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (d. 1111) has not yet ended.

V

CENTRAL ASIA AND CHINA

KHOJAGĀNĪ ORIGINS AND THE CRITIQUE OF SUFISM: THE RHETORIC OF COMMUNAL UNIQUENESS IN THE *MANĀQIB* OF KHOJA ʿALĪ ʿAZĪZĀN RĀMĪTANĪ

DEVIN DEWEESE

The overwhelming dominance of Sufi thought and organizations in the religious and political life of Central Asia from the Mongol era down to the nineteenth century suggests a redirection of our search for an ongoing debate between Sufism and its opponents, away from a focus on outright anti-Sufi polemic (of which we find remarkably few examples in Central Asia until the era of Russian rule) and toward a consideration of patterns discernible in the content, and above all in the use, of rhetoric critical of Sufism. Even here we are hampered by our sources, which tend to reveal the arguments of Sufism's opponents (even among the Sufis) primarily through their inverted reflection in defenses of Sufism, leaving us uncertain as to whether such implied "debates" actually echoed real tensions, or merely stylized dialectic, at a given time.

We can nevertheless point to several patterns and continuities in this connection that I believe are instructive with regard to Sufism's hold on popular and learned religious imagination in Central Asia, as well as to Central Asia's religious history in general, before the period of Russian domination. These include the relative rarity of actual anti-Sufi literature produced in Central Asia after the thirteenth century; the "practical" focus of opposition to Sufism in Central Asia, which is couched above all in terms of suspicion regarding specific aspects of Sufi ritual or organization (the pursuit of ecstatic states, the use of music and dance, asceticism and seclusion, the visitation of saints' shrines, the role of the shaykh); occasional hostility toward the political and economic influence enjoyed by Sufi

shaykhs or communities; and the appropriation of anti-Sufi rhetoric — including elements drawn from each of the preceding categories — in Sufi hagiography and in rivalries among Sufi communities.

It is the latter issue that will be considered in this contribution — and not the broader question of incorporating anti-Sufi polemic within Sufi literature for didactic purposes (in order to inform and enliven models of entering and following the mystical path), but rather the appropriation of such attacks for use in negotiating communal rivalries among Sufi circles (in order to target rival Sufi groups or leaders for some fault or inadequacy, whether in straying dangerously from Islamic propriety, in having only the external trappings of Sufism, or simply in failing to deliver on Sufism's promises). In particular, we will consider the adaptation of anti-Sufi rhetoric among early communities linked to the Sufi lineages that produced the Naqshbandiyya, exploring a little-known source (centered upon the early fourteenth-century “Khojagānī” shaykh ʿAlī ʿAzīzān Rāmītanī) in which a clear assertion of communal distinctiveness is couched in an extended dialectic driven by the rejection of elements of “normative” Sufi tradition.

The adoption of apparently anti-Sufi rhetoric by writers who were themselves Sufis is hardly uncommon in Islamic history; from the beginnings of Sufi literature we can find (for instance in the works of al-Kalābādhī or Hujwīrī) a sustained critique of the state of “latter-day” Sufism, and attacks on purely formalist or fraudulent shaykhs, using language turned against the whole phenomenon of Sufism by its opponents, were to become a standard feature in hagiographical, didactic, and polemical works by Sufis themselves. In addition, Sufis inevitably turned such rhetoric against other Sufis with whom they differed regarding the suitability of certain specific practices or teachings; the case of Ibn Taymiyya may suffice to remind us that even the most inveterate opponent of many elements we (and some Sufis) may take to be intimately connected with Sufism might at the same time have been deeply attached to one expression of that tradition.¹

¹ See, on Ibn Taymiyya's Sufism, George Makdisi, 'Ibn Taimiyya: A Šūfī of the Qādiriyya Order', *American Journal of Arabic Studies* v (1973) 118-129; and Th. E. Homerin, 'Ibn Taimiyya's *al-Šūfiyyah wa-al-Fuqarā'*', *Arabica* xxxii (1985) 219-244; but see Fritz Meier, *Das sauberste über die vorbestimmung*, *Saeculum* xxxii (1981) 74 ff; also published in Fritz Meier, *Bausteine. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Islamwissenschaft*, i-iii (Istanbul-Stuttgart 1992) ii, 696 ff.. Ibn Taymiyya's views on some specific issues customarily linked with Sufism are

The case of Ibn Taymiyya is perhaps doubly instructive, insofar as both his commitment to Sufism, and his vigorous denunciation of several practices commonly associated with it, stemmed from his zeal to reform Islam and the Muslim community in the wake of the upheavals of the thirteenth century. Much the same environment, but in a setting even more directly challenged by infidel rule (in the form of the Mongols) than was Ibn Taymiyya's, seems to have shaped the Central Asian example of "reformist" Sufism considered here; and in this regard we may note that Ibn Taymiyya not only attacked specific practices associated with Sufism (such as *raqs* and *samā'*^c) that were rejected by his Central Asian counterparts, but like them distinguished "real" Sufis from lesser, subordinate types marked by preoccupation with institutional structures such as the *khānqāh*.²

More subtle than the outright criticism of Sufism's "contemporary" state at a given time, or of aspects of Sufi doctrine or practice deemed inappropriate or harmful, is the use by Sufis of anti-Sufi rhetoric — sometimes in inverted guise — in a dialectic designed to highlight a particular shaykh's spiritual preeminence. Especially in hagiography, for instance, we find frequent examples of the inversion of anti-Sufi rhetoric in order to set up a victory of one shaykh over an enemy or doubter; the motif of overcoming the *inkār* ("rejection") by externalist scholars, or even by insufficiently humble Sufi adepts, is implicitly rooted in the attacks of Sufism's opponents, and the frequent evocations of this motif amount to the perceptible half of an ongoing dialogue, of which the other half remains unspoken.

More broadly, however, much of Sufi literature, and especially hagiographical anecdotes and dialogues, employs an essentially dialectical process as a means of affirming the greater insight, higher spiritual state, or more effective guidance exhibited by a particular shaykh, or by a particular tradition. That is, an accepted and revered formulation of some aspect of Sufi (or more generally Muslim) tradi-

examined in the context of his contemporaries' in Louis Pouzet, 'Prises de position autour du 'samā'' en orient musulman au VII^e/XIII^e siècle', *Studia Islamica* lvii (1983) 119-134; see also two recent studies of separate works, Jean R. Michot, tr., *Musique et danse selon Ibn Taymiyya: Le Livre du Samā' et de la Danse (Kitāb al-Samā' wa'l-Raqṣ) compilé par le shaykh Muḥammad al-Manbijī* (Paris 1991) and Niels Henrik Olesen, *Culte des saints et pèlerinage chez Ibn Taymiyya* (Paris 1991) as well as the study of Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taimiyya's Struggle against Popular Religion* (La Haye/Paris 1976).

² See Homerin, 'Ibn Taimiyya's *al-Ṣūfiyyah wa-al-fuqarā'* 233, for his relegation of Sufis who maintain *khānqāhs* to an intermediate position, between the real Sufis and the purely formalist Sufis; a similar critique is implied in the Central Asian work considered below.

tion will be proposed or represented by one figure (a less advanced disciple, a rival, a formalist scholar, etc.) who serves as a foil to the shaykh; the shaykh can then counter that formulation, refining it or completely overturning it, and achieving three goals in the process: his alternative formulation demonstrates his superior discernment or attainment; it decisively defeats the opponent, convinces the doubter, or provides a spiritual breakthrough for the disciple; and it supercedes the old formulation (at least rhetorically, if not in historical terms), providing a more meaningful or accessible approximation of essentially inexpressible truths (in this process, of course, his formulation risks becoming the revered truth to be targeted in subsequent dialectic).

Our focus here will be one example of the incorporation of anti-Sufi rhetoric as the foundation for a dialectic used in the service of a what we may rightly understand as a “reformist” current in Central Asian Sufism, namely the Khojagānī tradition best known as the precursor to the Naqshbandiyya. This one example suggests an expanded use of this dialectical model not merely in narrative or doctrinal debate, to score points on the basis of greater insight or aptitude, but in actual competitive struggles among Sufi communities vying for more concrete goals. Unfortunately, our understanding of these competitive struggles remains quite rudimentary, and even the literary reflections of early Khojagānī and Naqshbandī polemics directed against other Sufi communities in Central Asia, where the tradition took shape, have not received much attention; at the risk of overgeneralizing, however, there appears to be a noticeable shift in the style of Khojagānī and Naqshbandī polemic that correlates, further, with the period that saw the emergence of actual Sufi “orders” marked by a self-conscious evocation of the legacy of some historical “founder”. That is, by the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, at least, we can trace more clearly the outlines of the critiques used against other such groups, including those linked to the Yasawī and Kubrawī traditions,³ and these critiques tend to empha-

³ On the Khojagānī and Naqshbandī attacks on the Yasawī tradition, see my ‘The *Mashā’ikh-i Turk* and the *Khojagān*: Rethinking the Links between the Yasawī and Naqshbandī Sufi Traditions’, *Journal of Islamic Studies* vii (1996) 180-207. Kubrawī responses to primarily Naqshbandī attacks, evident already in the hagiographical tradition surrounding Sayyid ‘Alī Hamadānī (d. 1385) are noted in my ‘Sayyid ‘Alī Hamadānī and Kubrawī Hagiographical Traditions’, in Leonard Lewisohn (ed.), *The Legacy of Mediaeval Persian Sufism* (London 1992) 121-158 (see especially 144-146); for the Naqshbandī attack on the Kubrawiyya’s ‘Alid *silsila*, see my ‘Eclipse of the Kubrawiyyah in Central Asia’, *Iranian*

size particular features of practice [e.g., dance and music (*raqs* and *samāʿ*), often in public settings, the propriety of seeking mystical enrapturement (*wajd*), the value of contemplative seclusion and retirement (*ʿuzlat*, *khalwat*), and later the vocal *dhikr*] or of succession (with hereditary shaykhs a favorite target of derision). What we seem to find from the earlier period, however — in the thirteenth and especially the fourteenth century — is evidence of a much broader critique of what had become the standard external and conceptual trappings of Sufi communities, and this Khojagānī critique stands not so much as an outright rejection of institutional Sufism, or as a simple attack on rival groups' practices, but as a wide-ranging assertion of communal distinctiveness and superiority.

This, in turn, suggests that we consider the Khojagānī Sufi communities of the thirteenth-fifteenth centuries, as well as, in large measure, the Naqshbandiyya itself, as a movement that arose in opposition to established Sufi groups, naturally invoking elements of a critique of Sufism in general as part of its effort to demonstrate its legitimacy and distinctiveness on a broader front; the specific content of the critique as evident in the particular work we will explore also helps us appreciate the social and political environment in which those Sufi communities found such rhetoric advantageous, and helps us understand the context for the development of some particular features of the later Naqshbandiyya (for example, the firm attachment to the sharia with which it is often credited). For although the Naqshbandiyya later appears as a normative, and even as the typical, Sufi order, its early history — and especially the work that is our focus here — provides many hints that its rise was fueled initially by a sustained critique not only of specific practices adopted by other Sufi communities, but of elements that the Khojagānī tradition considered susceptible to largely justifiable attack by those who would reject Sufism altogether; its message, simply put, was, first, that the Sufism around us is indeed corrupt, and, second, that we are not like other Sufis.

The work in question is a compilation, with extensive commentary, of the sayings of Khoja ʿAlī ʿAzīzān Rāmītanī, a Central Asian Sufi of the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries best known as a link in the “Khojagānī” *silsila* that connects Bahāʾ ad-Dīn Naqshband (d. 1389) with ʿAbd al-Khālīq Ghijduwānī (d. ca. 1220); the

Studies xxi (1988) 82. Other Sufi groups bore the brunt of Khoja Aḥrār's attacks, above all the ʿIshqī communities near Samarqand, as evident in the hagiographies devoted to Aḥrār.

sayings were not only arranged by the compiler (to whom we will return shortly), but were considerably augmented by him as well, and the resulting work — assigned only a generic title as the “*Manāqib* of Khoja ‘Alī ‘Azīzān Rāmītanī” — displays features characteristic of several genres of Sufi literature, being part *malḡūzāt*, part anecdotal hagiography, part doctrinal treatise, and part polemical apologia. The work is preserved in at least eight manuscript copies described in published catalogues, the earliest of which dates only to the late eighteenth century; five are in Tashkent, at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan,⁴ and three are in St. Petersburg, at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.⁵ Aside from the respective catalogue descriptions, the work has otherwise been noted only by Bartol’d, who however did no more than mention one copy he found among the manuscripts belonging to V.L. Viatkin in Samarkand.⁶

The central figure in the *Manāqib*, Khoja ‘Alī ‘Azīzān Rāmītanī, is mentioned in sources produced within Khojagānī and Naqshbandī circles from the mid-fourteenth to early fifteenth centuries, as well as in much later works that continued to record his place in the Khojagānī *silsila* (‘Abd al-Khālīq Ghijduwānī > ‘Arif Rīwgārī > Maḥmūd Anjīr Faghnaḡwī > Rāmītanī > Muḥammad Bābā Sammāsī > Sayyid Amīr Kulāl > Bahā’ ad-Dīn Naqshband); the most ex-

4 Hereafter “IVANUZ;” see the catalogue descriptions in *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii nauk Uzbekskoi SSR*, ed. A. A. Semenov, vol. iii (Tashkent 1955) 221, No. 2287 (Inventory No. 858/i, ff.1b-128a, copied 1279/1862); No. 2288 (Inv. No. 399/i, ff.1b-119a, copied 1276/1859); No. 2289 (Inv. No. 1332, 66 + 16 ff., incomplete, copied in the 19th century); vol. viii (Tashkent 1967) 412-413, No. 5970 (Inv. No. 8743/ii, ff.167b-259a, copied 1266/1850, with the fullest description); 414, No. 5971 (Inv. No. 5433, 111 ff., copied 1283/1866-67). The institute’s card catalogue lists, in addition, Inv. No. 12249/ii (120ff., dated 1291/1874-75) as a copy of this work.

5 N.D. Miklukho-Maklai, O.F. Akimushkin, et al., eds., *Persidskie i tadzhikskie rukopisi Instituta narodov Azii AN SSSR (Kratkii alfavitnyi katalog)* Part I (Moscow 1964) 571, No. 4283 (Inv. No. B2385, ff.9b-74a, copied 1199/1784-85, Shāhābād); No. 4284 (Inv. No. C1415, 111ff., copied 1300/1882-83); No. 4285 (Inv. No. C1804, ff.3b-93b, undated).

6 See his ‘Otchet o komandirovke v Turkestan’ (originally published in 1904) in his *Sochineniia* viii (Moscow 1973) 152, No. 20; he describes the work only as “an account by the son of the shaykh Khoja ‘Alī ‘Azīzān about his father and other shaykhs of the Naqshbandi order”, and the manuscript only as “recent”. The Viatkin collection was later transferred to the Institute of Oriental Studies in Tashkent, where the copy to which Bartol’d refers is now evidently Inv. No. 5433 (*Sobranie* viii, 414, No. 5971). I have examined several of the Tashkent manuscripts, and have utilized from microfilm the Tashkent copy 8743 (to which all citations are given, referring to MS “T”) and the St. Petersburg copy B2385.

tensive account of him, however (outside the virtually unknown *Manāqib*), is found in the *Rashaḥāt-i ʿayn al-ḥayāt*, the pivotal Naqshbandī hagiography devoted to the career of Khoja ʿUbaydullāh Ahrār (d. 1490), completed at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The *Rashaḥāt*'s account of Rāmītanī⁷ notes his designation as successor to Khoja Maḥmūd Anjīr Faghnawī, and records sixteen brief anecdotal accounts focused on the shaykh's sayings, as well as three longer stories illustrative of his "wonders" (*khawāriq-i ʿādāt*), but provides few particulars regarding his external life. It affirms that he was a weaver by trade, and though he was born in Rāmītan, a town not far from Bukhārā, he died and was buried in Khorezm.⁸ The *Manāqib* refines this picture somewhat, explaining that after his training with Khoja Maḥmūd Anjīr Faghnawī in Bukhārā, Rāmītanī went first to Bāward (Abīward) and only later to Khorezm; hence the people of Bukhārā call him "Shaykh ʿAlī Rāmītanī", while the people of Khorezm call him "Shaykh ʿAlī Bāwardī".⁹

Aside from this sparse information, the *Rashaḥāt* records an anecdote according to which an unidentified "Khorezmshāh" and his advisers were induced to become devotees of Rāmītanī after initially fearing the shaykh's enormous popularity with the people; the *Manāqib*, unfortunately, adds nothing to help us understand this anecdote, and aside from a brief reference to a *madrasa* of the Amīr Qutluḡ Tīmūr (Özbek Khan's governor in Khorezm),¹⁰ and a story about Rāmītanī's dealings, as a weaver, in a bazar of Khorezm,¹¹ there is little in the work that specifically reflects Rāmītanī's career or status in the region where he spent the latter part of his life. As for his death date, the *Rashaḥāt* tells us that Rāmītanī died on Monday, 28 Dhū'l-Qaʿda 715/23 February 1316, but adds that some give the year of his death as 721/1321; the latter variant seems to reflect a tradition, also recorded in the *Rashaḥāt*,¹² that affirmed Bahāʾ ad-

⁷ Fakhr ad-Dīn ʿAlī b. Ḥusayn "Ṣafī", *Rashaḥāt-i ʿayn al-ḥayāt*, ed. ʿAlī Aṣghar Muʿīniyān (Tehran 2536/1356/1977) i, 62-72. See also the much shorter account of Rāmītanī in Jāmi's *Nafaḥāt al-uns*, ed. Mahdi Tawḥīdīpūr (Tehran 1336/1958) 380; and see the recent critical edition of the *Nafaḥāt* by Maḥmūd ʿĀbidī (Tehran 1370/1991, second printing 1373/1994) 385.

⁸ His shrine in the town of Kōne Ūrgench (Russian "Kunia Urgench") in Turkmenistan was long in disrepair, but showed signs of substantial pilgrimage activity and some restoration when visited in the spring of 1995.

⁹ T, ff. 167b-168a.

¹⁰ T, f. 224b.

¹¹ T, ff. 226b-227a.

¹² *Rashaḥāt* i, 95.

Dīn Naqshband's birth (in Muḥarram 718/March 1318) still during the lifetime of Rāmītanī. The *Rashaḥāt* also reports the tradition that Rāmītanī lived to the age of 130; whether this deserves credence or not, a long and vigorous life is also implied in the death dates provided in the *Rashaḥāt* for two sons of Rāmītanī: one, known as Khoja-i Khūrd, reportedly died just 19 days after his father (17 Dhū'l-Ḥijja/13 March, assuming 715), while the younger, Khoja Ibrāhīm — who as we will see played the central role in transmitting his father's *Manāqib* — died in 793/1391. Such a great gap between the death of father and son might call into question the reliability of either date, but the figures portrayed in the *Rashaḥāt* as contemporaries of the Khoja ʿAlī ʿAzīzān suggest that a death date of 715/1316 or 721/1321 must be approximately correct. As his contemporaries the *Rashaḥāt* names the eminent Kubrawī shaykh ʿAlāʾ al-Dawla-i Simnānī (d. 1336), with whom he is portrayed as corresponding; Badr al-Dīn Maydānī, a prominent shaykh of Bukhārā known also from Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who casts him as an interlocutor of the Chaghatayid khan Kebek (r. ca.1318-1326); and Sayyid Ata, a saint of the Yasawī tradition ascribed in early traditions the conversion to Islam of the khan Özbek (r. 1313-1341) of the Golden Horde.

The *Manāqib*, as noted, adds little to this picture of Rāmītanī's life, but is devoted rather to recording and explaining his sayings on aspects of the Sufi path; it provides our most extensive source on his pronouncements on matters of doctrine and practice, but the likelihood that Rāmītanī's legacy was also separately transmitted in oral tradition, and possibly in written form, preserved outside the circles that produced the *Manāqib* is confirmed by the *Rashaḥāt*'s evident independence from that work for its account of the shaykh's deeds and sayings.¹³ The *Manāqib* itself, however, has undergone con-

¹³ The *Rashaḥāt* does not mention the *Manāqib*, nor is there any specific correspondence between the sayings and anecdotes it records and those included in the *Manāqib*. We may note here, in addition, that a brief work ascribed to Rāmītanī, bearing the heading *Risāla-i sharīfa-i Khoja ʿAzīzān ʿAlī Rāmītanī*, is occasionally found in collections of Naqshbandi treatises, and was printed in a collection lithographed in Delhi in 1924 (*Rasāʾil sitta ḍarūriyya* 7-11). The treatise provides no biographical material or other material by which to judge its authenticity, but consists merely of ten principles (each called a *sharʿ*) of the Sufi path, the last of which involves a story about appropriate and inappropriate food, involving ʿAbd al-Khālīq Ghijduwānī and Khidr, that is also echoed in the *Rashaḥāt*'s account of Rāmītanī. This treatise does not appear to be found in early collections of Naqshbandi or Khojagānī materials, or to be mentioned in other works; in view of the rudimentary state of the identification and analysis of such materials, however, this hardly amounts to decisive evidence against its attribution, and in this regard we may note that the *Manāqib* does not appear to have been widely cited in later

siderable textual development between Rāmītānī and the form in which it survives. The first central figure in its preservation was Rāmītānī's younger son, Khoja Ibrāhīm; his role in recording his father's sayings was noted in a hagiographical compendium produced in Khorezm in the eighteenth century, which indeed cites passages from the work as we now have it.¹⁴ The fullest account of his work, however, appears in the introduction to the extant version of the *Manāqib*.

The compiler of the work in its extant form was a certain Muḥammad b. Nizām al-Khwārazmī al-Arzangī,¹⁵ of whom virtually nothing is known.¹⁶ This Muḥammad's introduction explains that after Rāmītānī's death, his son, Khoja Ibrāhīm, sat in his father's place and maintained the shaykh's *khānqāh* in Khorezm; one of Khoja Ibrāhīm's disciples, Mawlānā Jamāl ad-Dīn Ṣarrāf, asked him to record what he had heard of his father's sayings and litanies, and Khoja Ibrāhīm fulfilled the request, thus compiling a *tadhkira*. Then Muḥammad, the compiler, chanced upon this collection of Rāmītānī's sayings during a visit to Balkh; he examined them, found them "very fine, and suitable for commentary and elaboration (*sharḥ wa baṣṭī*)", "even though Shaykh °Alī °Azīzān was illiterate (*ummī*)". He thus wrote down his sayings, and commented and expanded upon them, to the extent of his power; "and it was as if this power and ability came upon me from the *rūḥāniyyat* of the °Azīzān". Further, the compiler continues, "I also attached to this

Naqshbandī sources either.

¹⁴ The work in question is known, from the name of its author, as the *Tadhkira-i Tāhir Īshān*, and was completed in 1157/1744; I have used MS IVANUz 855 (SVR iii, 364-365, No. 2694) with the account of Rāmītānī and his sons appearing on ff. 95a-99b (passages cited from the *Manāqib* appear on ff. 95a, 98b-99a). Tāhir Īshān cites also the *Rashāḥāt*, but reports an anecdote about Rāmītānī, not found in other sources, transmitted by a certain Qāḍī Raḥmān-berdī Khiwāqī, and notes the prominence of Rāmītānī's shrine in Khorezm; in addition, Tāhir Īshān notes that Khoja Ibrāhīm's grave is in Khuzār, a dependency of Qarshī (the older Nakhshab or Nasaf, in the Qashqa-Daryā valley).

¹⁵ The latter *nisba* seems clearly written thus but remains unidentified.

¹⁶ I have not traced him in any Central Asian hagiographical compendium, or in any other work. In the *Manāqib* itself (T, f. 248a) he mentions another work of his, entitled *Mizān as-sulūk*, in which he says he has given a more detailed account of the conditions of maintaining *khānqāhs*; I have not traced any such work. He also refers several times to another book, which he calls merely the *Miṣdāq*, and from which the citations are invariably in verse; unfortunately, the various terms he uses to refer to the author of the *Miṣdāq* are ambiguous (at first he refers to it as a work of the "°azīzān", implying Rāmītānī, or simply "°azīz", suggesting that Rāmītānī's son Khoja Ibrāhīm might be meant, but twice, at least, he uses the phrase "in *da'if*", referring to himself, in passages that give no indication of being direct quotations from Khoja Ibrāhīm's work or from a work of Rāmītānī himself).

treatise of Khoja Ibrāhīm some sayings that were not found in that treatise, but which were (known) among his *aṣḥāb* and among the *khānawāda* of the Khoja ‘Abd al-Khālīqiyān” (we will return to this phrase); with God’s blessing and help he commented and expanded upon these too, and structured the treatise in two *bābs*: the first includes the sayings that the treatise of Khoja Ibrāhīm recorded from his father Khoja ‘Alī ‘Azīzān, while the second contains those sayings not found in the treatise of Khoja Ibrāhīm, but current among the *aṣḥāb-i Khoja ‘Abd al-Khālīqiyān* and among the disciples of the ‘Azīzān.

It seems likely, though it is by no means certain, that the compiler, Muḥammad, had some connection with the Sufi tradition of Khoja ‘Alī ‘Azīzān Rāmītanī, and perhaps with Khoja Ibrāhīm himself or with some other community that preserved the Rāmītanī legacy; on the other hand, it is not impossible that his eagerness to serve as commentator upon Rāmītanī’s dicta as transmitted by Khoja Ibrāhīm reflects instead an attempt to appropriate that legacy and thus claim the mantle for what may have been originally a separate or even rival community. We likewise have few indications of precisely when the compiler’s work should be dated; he claims to have seen all three homes of Rāmītanī (in Rāmītan, Bāward, and Khorezm), suggesting a time soon enough after his death for such sites to have been still known, but he never explicitly affirms that he met Khoja Ibrāhīm personally (much less Rāmītanī himself), and it cannot be ruled out that he had a purely literary acquaintance with the work of . All that Muḥammad says of himself, as we will see, implies that he conceived his Sufi affiliation not with any specific lineage linked to Rāmītanī, but more broadly, with the legacy of ‘Abd al-Khālīq Ghijduwānī; this in itself may suggest a departure from the personal and familial tradition of Khoja Ibrāhīm toward an evocation of a “founder” of a broader community of the kind that marked a transition to actual Sufi orders of the classical type. Such transitions are evidenced in other traditions between the latter fourteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries,¹⁷ and this suggests in the most general terms that the compiler’s work should be dated early in the fifteenth century.

The entire *Manāqib* of Rāmītanī is clearly of considerable importance for a proper understanding of the development of the

¹⁷ See, for a Kubrawī example, my ‘Sayyid ‘Alī Hamadānī’ 139 ff.; we find a similar emergence of “*ṭarīqa*-consciousness” in Yasawī communities during the fifteenth century as well.

Khojagānī and later Naqshbandī Sufi traditions; Khoja ʿAlī ʿAzīzān Rāmītānī's place in the "proto-Naqshbandī" *silṣila* has long been known, but little attention has been devoted, in previous studies of Naqshbandī or Khojagānī history,¹⁸ either to any of these intermediate links between Ghijduwānī and Bahāʾ ad-Dīn, or to the further branchings of the *silṣila*, at each stage, outside the lineage that led directly to Bahāʾ ad-Dīn. Without taking up these questions here, we may note that an examination of sources produced within those other branchings is imperative if we seek a clearer and less tendentious understanding of the Khojagānī tradition; and the *Manāqib* of Rāmītānī belongs prominently within a small group of still largely untapped sources produced in Khojagānī circles that were not shaped by the eventual dominance of the single lineage through Bahāʾ ad-Dīn Naqshband.¹⁹

¹⁸ See the older work of Marijan Molé, "Autour du Daré Mansour: l'apprentissage mystique de Bahāʾ al-Dīn Naqshband", *Revue des études islamiques* xxvii (1959) 35-66; the seminal article of Hamid Algar, 'The Naqshbandī Order: A Preliminary Survey of its History and Significance', *Studia Islamica* xliv (1976) 123-152, with an expanded version, 'A brief history of the Naqshbandī order', in Marc Gaborieau, Alexandre Popovic, and Thierry Zarcone (ed.), *Naqshbandis: cheminements et situation actuelle d'un ordre mystique musulmane* (Istanbul-Paris 1990) 3-44; and the important study (focused on the career of Khoja Ahrār) of Jürgen Paul, *Die politische und soziale Bedeutung der Naqshbandiyya in Mittelasien im 15. Jahrhundert* (Berlin 1991).

¹⁹ The others include the earliest, the *Maslak al-ʿarīfīn*, which reveals an interesting communal division over the issue of vocal vs. silent *dhikr* (the lineage normally given for Bahāʾ ad-Dīn Naqshband belongs to the faction blamed in this work for departing from Ghijduwānī's practice and adopting the vocal *dhikr*); this work's importance was noted in the brief survey of K.A. Nizami, 'The Naqshbandiyya Order', in Seyyed Hossein Nasr (ed.), *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations* (New York 1991) 162-193 (Nizami, 167 and 189, note 33, describes a copy of the work in his possession as "unique", but twelve other copies are in fact mentioned in printed catalogues, with manuscripts preserved in London, Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Tashkent). Also in this group is the *Maqāmāt-i Amīr Kulāl*, which alone among these works has drawn some attention (see the works of Algar and Paul cited above); and a small work preserved in a unique manuscript in Tashkent on the life of Amīr-i Khūrd Wābkānī, a senior contemporary of Bahāʾ ad-Dīn from a collateral Khojagānī lineage [see SVR viii, 407-408, No. 5963, Inv. No. 7065/i (ff.1b-15b, copied 1250/1834)]. Possibly belonging to this corpus of pre-Naqshbandī Khojagānī literature (or at least partially reflecting some early phase of such literature) are two other works, marked by a complicated textual history and by the circulation of quite divergent variants; one version of each has been published by Saʿīd Nafisi, 'Risāla-i ṣāhibiyya', in *Farhang-i Īrān-zamīn* i (1332/1953) 70-101, and 'Maqāmāt-i ʿAbd al-Khāliq-i Ghijduwānī wa ʿArīf Riwgari', in *Farhang-i Īrān-zamīn* ii (1954) 1-18. A fuller discussion of these works is provided in an upcoming study of the Yasawī Sufi tradition. Aside from these works, the extant body of sources on the Khojagānī and Naqshbandī traditions all stem from lineages descended spiritually from Bahāʾ ad-Dīn Naqshband, and reflect the transformation of the Khojagānī tradition effected by Bahāʾ ad-Dīn and his major disciples.

We cannot do justice to the *Manāqib* in a brief article, but the remarks above may suffice to give a preliminary idea of its importance; for present purposes its value lies in its use of characteristic of anti-Sufi attacks for the purpose of legitimizing the author/compiler's Khojagānī community and distinguishing it from other Sufi groups. We may, accordingly, concentrate on the sections most marked by such rhetoric, which appears in the first *bāb*, but virtually defines the structure of a significant part of the second. The fact that the use of this rhetoric is most pronounced in the second part of the work — dominated by the compiler's "commentary" — suggests not only a certain reworking and reformulation of material in the course of communal change and historical development, but the adoption, as well, of specific markers of communal practice and organization — markers explored through a dialectic that challenges what had become normative features of other Sufi groups — as the focus of communal self-definition and solidarity.

The first *bāb*²⁰ offers some examples of a critique of Sufism in the author's day. The excesses of certain communities are criticized, among them the Qalandars;²¹ but more generally the prevailing status of Sufism is decried (for example, in a passage clearly due to the compiler) for the preponderance of charlatans who seek only public acclaim, desiring to be known for maintaining a *khānqāh* or handing out bread, and even performing the *dhikr* in order to "obtain something from the people", whether money, clothing, food, or the like.²² A more subtle critique is implied in the treatment of the *dhikr* itself in this section,²³ for after affirming that "the true man" is one whose heart never for an instant turns away from the remembrance of God (a principle that became a centerpiece of Naqshbandī practice), we find a delineation of the types of *dhikr* not only by content,²⁴ but by social and communal orientation as well.

The highest type is the *dhikr-i khāṣṣ al-khawāṣṣ*, which results in the beatific vision and is clearly the ideal set by the author; its social

20 T, ff. 169b-226b.

21 T, f. 211a.

22 T, f. 222b.

23 T, ff. 220a-b, 222a.

24 T, ff. 221a-b. We may note, incidentally, that the issue of the style of *dhikr*, silent or vocal, is not addressed; despite the apparent approval, in this passage, of the silent, interior *dhikr* of the heart, Rāmītanī (and with him the entire Khojagānī lineage from his master down to Bahā' ad-Dīn Naqshband's master) is consistently ascribed (in the *Rashāhāt*, for instance) a firm attachment to the vocal *dhikr*.

parameters are not explicitly specified, however, leaving his account of the other, lower types more interesting for our purposes. First is the *dhikr-i ʿāmm*, explained as what ordinary people employ, by blind repetition and without understanding its true meaning, in the market and on the street; its result is that the people of the world call its practitioner a *dhākir* and regard him as a good man. While the *dhikr-i ʿāmm* is obviously regarded as the lowest form, what we appear to have here is a remarkable attestation of the penetration of Sufi ritual formulas among the public at large, and of their potential as public markers of religiosity and virtue. To be sure, the author does not explicitly deny the legitimacy of the *dhikr-i ʿāmm*, but his characterization of it, combined with the hierarchical position he assigns to it, suggests already the structure of the critique we will find more clearly enunciated in the second part of the work; for as we will see, it is precisely the inclusion of the “common people”, of various stripes, in the activities and communal structures of Sufism from which the Khojagānī circles reflected in this work seem to be intent upon distinguishing themselves.

The intermediate type of *dhikr*, the *dhikr-i khāṣṣ*, is explained as what the companions of a particular shaykh practice in contemplative seclusion (*khalwat*); and this *dhikr*, unlike the others, is explicitly linked to what is transmitted from past shaykhs through a Sufi *silsila*. In this case, though the critique is not explicitly elaborated, the author seems clearly to evoke the practices and structures relegated more unambiguously, in the second part of the work, to the Sufi communities representing what the Khojagān abandoned; the *dhikr-i khāṣṣ* is the *dhikr* of the traditional Sufi community against which the Khojagān may perhaps best be understood as a reaction, but we must wait for the second *bāb* to find more pointed juxtapositions of similar traditional symbols with their Khojagānī alternative.

In the second *bāb*,²⁵ as noted, the compiler presents his “commentary” on sayings said to be current, according to the heading, “among the companions of Khoja ʿAbd al-Khāliq and among the companions of the ʿAzīzān”; but in fact, aside from a few anecdotes about Rāmītanī, and the occasional repetition of a saying recorded in the first *bāb*, all of the sayings taken as the “text” for commentary and elaboration are ascribed simply to the “*aṣḥāb-i Khoja ʿAbd al-Khāliqiyān*”, a group never defined more precisely in the work. The

²⁵ T, ff. 226b-259a.

phrase “‘Abd al-Khālīqiyān” clearly refers to the Sufi communities linked to the tradition of ‘Abd al-Khālīq Ghijduwānī; I have not found it used, however, in that sense or any other, in earlier or later Khojagānī or Naqshbandī sources.

It is not entirely clear, moreover, precisely what relationship the compiler felt with this group. In view of the complexity of the Khojagānī *silsila* and the communities it reflects in this period,²⁶ we may imagine either that the compiler’s effort amounts to an appropriation of earlier “Rāmītanī” lore in the service of rival Khojagānī groups (i.e., he was turning the dicta of the spiritual or natural ancestor of a defunct, but formerly rival, Sufi community into material suitable for a mainstream Khojagānī group), or that his work reflects the steady and linear development of the Rāmītanī group into the mainstream Khojagāniyya.²⁷ Other variants are possible, but what seems clear is that the author is himself supportive of the positions he ascribes to the ‘Abd al-Khālīqiyān, however much he may have reformulated their original intent; what is at issue is whether these positions, as he formulates them, would have been recognizable by followers of Rāmītanī or of Khoja Ibrāhīm — and of course there may well have been divergent communal legacies stemming from Rāmītanī, since even the *Rashaḥāt* appears to distinguish the type of succession represented by Rāmītanī’s two sons from that represented by the four figures (all poorly known) named as his actual khalīfas in Sufism.

In any case, other early Khojagānī and Naqshbandī sources make it clear that ‘Abd al-Khālīq Ghijduwānī was indeed the focus of com-

²⁶ As I hope to explore in more detail in a separate study, the earliest source on the Khojagānī *silsila*, the *Maslak al-‘arīfīn* presents a quite different picture from the later, rationalized structure reflected in the *Rashaḥāt*, both in terms of communal schisms and in terms of basic transmission lines; see my preliminary comments in ‘The Mashā’ikh-i Turk and the Khojagān’.

²⁷ The latter development might be supported by the fact that Bahā’ ad-Dīn Naqshband and the mainstream Naqshbandiyya, despite their emphasis upon the silent *dhikr*, trace their only complete and historical *silsila* — as opposed to the ahistorical “Uwaysī” connection linking Bahā’ ad-Dīn with Ghijduwānī directly but in exclusively spiritual fashion — through Rāmītanī, despite the latter’s association, in early Khojagānī sources, with the vocal *dhikr*. On the other hand, a more discontinuous development might be argued on the basis of the compiler’s critique of the practice of maintaining *khānqāhs* (discussed below) since, as the compiler himself makes clear in his introduction, Rāmītanī’s own *khānqāh* was well-known in Khorezm; we must be careful, however, not to assume a direct, automatic, and sustained correspondence between rhetoric and actual practice in the midst of the communal rivalries and adaptations that characterize this period, and in any case the critique in the *Manāqib* does not delegitimize the maintenance of *khānqāhs*, but merely circumscribes the value of the practice.

munal self-identification such as is evidenced in the *Manāqib*'s second *bāb*. Ghijduwānī's purported teaching provided the basis and rationale for the fourteenth-century *Maslak al-ʿārifīn* (noted earlier), while Bahāʾ ad-Dīn Naqshband is portrayed not only as claiming direct spiritual training from Ghijduwānī's spirit, but as explicitly defining his path as that of the *khānawāda* of Khoja ʿAbd al-Khāliq Ghijduwānī.²⁸ In between these two, Rāmītanī himself is quoted (in both the *Rashāhāt* and in Jāmī's *Nafahāt*) as praising the posterity (apparently spiritual) of Ghijduwānī: if but one of them had lived on the earth in the time of al-Ḥallāj, he affirmed, that famous Sufi martyr would never have gone to the gallows.

What is also characteristic, however, of the sayings attributed in the *Manāqib* to the ʿAbd al-Khāliqiyān is not only a clear "group-consciousness", but a clear and repeated insistence that this group-consciousness rests upon specific positions on issues of Sufi practice and organization; that the focus is practical rather than doctrinal should not surprise us, but the aspects of practice highlighted as displaying a distinctively "ʿAbd al-Khāliqiyān" approach are significant, for neither the method of *dhikr*, nor the issue of *raqṣ* and *samāʿ*, nor the benefit or danger of cultivating mystical enrapturement (*wajd*) is addressed. Rather, the issues raised for the most part deal with the social profile of Sufis, and the positions taken are in the main couched in terms of opposition to or contrast with several elements that had become normative features of "public", institutional Sufism in Central Asia during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Here we may note that in the very assertion of group-consciousness on the basis of these contrasts in attitudes toward public and practical activity, the ʿAbd al-Khāliqiyān are already distinguished from many other Sufi communities of this era, which seem to have derived what group-consciousness they maintained from other sources: their group was bound together through natural descent from a shaykh, or through formal communal affiliation with a shaykh or his family, or by attachment to the charismatic person of a particular shaykh, or by reliance upon a particular method of Sufi practice considered most fruitful and efficacious.²⁹ Here in the *Manāqib* of Rāmītanī, however, the focus of group solidarity is a series of propositions shared, implicitly, through spiritual descent

²⁸ Ṣalāh b. Mubārak Bukhārī, *Anīs al-ṭālibīn wa-ʿuddat al-sālikīn*, ed. Khalīl Ibrāhīm Ṣārī Oghlī (Tehran 1371/1992) 120.

²⁹ See my discussion in 'An Uvaysī' Sufi' 34-36.

from the figure adopted as the group's founder (and at least in this source, namesake), °Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduwānī; and the propositions, again, are directed against several standard markers of normative institutional Sufism.

The first of these statements³⁰ already presents the communal distinctiveness of this group in terms of what it offers affiliates: the Khoja °Abd al-Khāliqiyān say, according to the compiler, "Our *khānawāda* is the *khānawāda* of 'Bring and take' (*ār-ō bar*), for however much you bring before these dervishes in the way of sincerity and supplication and pure devotion and full loyalty, you will take away the same amount in illumination and purity and felicity". After some discussion of this principle, further stories make the familiar point that the Sufi must have first the sharia, then *ṭarīqa*, then *ḥaqīqa*. The precedence of the sharia over the *ṭarīqa* is in fact taken up again at the end of the second *bāb* (without the issue being formulated in terms of the contrastive pairs we will discuss below); the argument focuses on the obligatory nature of observing the sharia, and unequivocally rejects the possibility that one can belong to the *ahl-i ṭarīqa* without being among the *ahl-i sharī'a*: one who claims such a status is in fact not of the *ahl-i ṭarīqa*, but is simply a "highwayman on the path" (*rāh-zan-i ṭarīqa*), to be likened to a person who performs *namāz* without having completed his ablutions.

The second *bāb* also features the compiler's commentary on five phrases said to be favorites of the *khānawāda* of Khoja °Abd al-Khāliq.³¹ Four of these are drawn from the familiar set of eight principles ascribed in other sources to °Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduwānī himself (and expanded to eleven by Bahā' ad-Dīn Naqshband), namely *hūsh dar dam*, *naẓar bar qadam*, *safar dar waṭan*, and *khalwat dar anjuman*; the last, a variation on a familiar Naqshbandī saying, appears in this work as *dil bā yār wa tan ba bāzār* ("the heart with God and the body at the marketplace"). After extended discussion of each of these, the section of greatest interest for us begins, in which the compiler cites, and then explains, four sayings by the °Abd al-Khāliqiyān in which they distance themselves from what we presume to be (as is borne out from sources of the period) standard features of Sufi communities of fourteenth-century Transoxania.

³⁰ T, ff. 228b-232a.

³¹ T, ff. 232b-244a.

(1) According to the first,³² the ʿAbd al-Khālīqiyān affirm that “In our *khānawāda* we do not talk of disciples (*murīds*); rather, in our *khānawāda*, there is a pact (*bayʿat*) with the people”. The compiler proceeds to explain the difference between *irādat* and *bayʿat*, but his discussion makes it clear that he (and presumably the Khojagānī community) is parting with the former only in a specific sense (inasmuch as he still refers to one who makes a *bayʿat* with a shaykh as his *murīd*); for in *irādat*, the compiler explains, a person surrenders his will entirely to the master’s control, becoming like a corpse in the hands of the washer, while in *bayʿat*, the *murīd* retains an element of choice and will. If someone whose relationship with a shaykh is framed in terms of *bayʿat* leaves the shaykh’s control, he does not become an “apostate from the Path” (*murtadd-i ṭarīqa*); nor is the shaykh responsible if such a person fails to reach his goal. The compiler also insists, appealing to a theme that fuels much of his argument, that the work of *irādat* is difficult, while that of the *bayʿat* is easy, and that this was the reason God enjoined the latter, but not the former, on the Prophet; consequently, he writes, the Khoja ʿAbd al-Khālīqiyān, “not wishing to make matters difficult for the disciple and for the shaykh”, abandoned establishing relations based on *irādat* and adopted instead the practice of the *bayʿat*.

This discussion is clearly idiosyncratic, and pits two elements of the Sufi path (which are not typically placed in opposition) not only as alternatives, but as pivotal markers that distinguish Sufi communities from one another: the ʿAbd al-Khālīqiyān are marked by the *bayʿat*, all others by *irādat*. Now the two words employed here, *irādat* and *bayʿat*, are hardly unknown in Sufi terminology, and instances of both a doctrinal and practical differentiation among terms similar to these, expressing aspects of the master-disciple relationship, are frequently encountered in Sufi literature. That is, we find distinguished, among the features of Sufi life transmitted from master to disciple, elements such as discipleship (*irāda*), instruction in doctrine or practice (*tarbiya*), training in *dhikr*, guidance in contemplative seclusion (*khalwa*), supervision of austerities (*riyāda*), etc., with specific symbols and insignia often associated separately with different elements (e.g., a specific *khirqā* or *bayʿat* to signify a particular kind of transmission), and with separate stipulations of licensure (*ijāza*) or permission (*rukḥṣa*) or even succession (*khilāfa*) possible for each element (or for different combinations of elements).

32 T, ff. 244a-246b.

It is of course difficult to judge, in some cases, how much these distinctions reflect a perhaps over-refined classificatory impulse rather than actual observance in practice, but they can hardly have been entirely formulaic; what is clear, in any case, is that at a certain stage in the development of Sufi communities (and here we must not expect a unidirectional or simultaneous development throughout the Muslim world) there is a shift from a common practice of obtaining these elements separately from independent shaykhs to an assumption that a single master would supply all facets of mystical instruction and training for a Sufi adept. In the most general of terms we may suppose that the distinction posed in the *Manāqib* of Rāmītanī between the terms *irādat* and *bayʿat* reflects a period before such a shift had occurred — or more precisely a period in which specific Sufi communities were formulating their particular approach to the organization and structure of Sufi life, not only in the context of its suitability and efficacy from the standpoint of doctrine and practice, but also in the context of competitive tensions among rival groups.

More specifically, however, we find here a relatively rare case of a direct juxtaposition of these particular terms, and it is not immediately evident why such a seemingly contrived opposition should be further highlighted as a mark of communal distinctiveness; this suggests that one of the terms, at least (most likely the notion of *irādat*, whose derivative, as noted, the compiler is compelled to use to refer to the pupil), had taken on some further implications toward which the compiler's community was ambivalent or downright hostile. Two further points made by the compiler may help us to suggest what those implications might have been. He notes that some compare the *pīr-i irādat* with the Prophet, "who summons outsiders to Islam", and the *pīr-i bayʿat* with a *ḥājī*, "who has seen the way to the Kaʿba and shows others the way"; and he differentiates the *pīr-i irādat*, who claims to convey people to God, from the *pīr-i bayʿat*, who is a guide and merely shows people the path. In the first of these distinctions there may be an allusion to the bonds of *irādat* established by shaykhs of the fourteenth century with entire communities in Transoxania, including many who were barely Islamized; we find ample evidence of such communal affiliations, consistently spoken of in terms of *irādat* and especially prevalent in connection with shaykhs linked to the Yasawī tradition, and it is not unlikely that by associating *irādat* with the conversion of unbelievers, but the *bayʿat* with a ritual obligation of Muslims, the compiler is signaling both his community's less comfortable relationship with the less

thoroughly Islamized inhabitants of Transoxania, and its implicit challenge to other shaykhs, and their communities, who exemplified the process of communal affiliation using the terminology of *irādat*.³³ The second distinction in a sense amplifies the first, but does so outside the framework of conversion implied there; in this case we may find an allusion to the increasingly common claims — ascribed to many shaykhs of incipient orders in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, including (with some refinements) Bahāʾ ad-Dīn Naqshband — of an almost automatic achievement of mystical goals simply through affiliation with the shaykh in question (an affiliation spoken of, again, in terms of *irādat*). The compiler, indeed, refers several times to the claim of the *pīr-i irādat* to convey his disciple to God directly and virtually without further volition on the disciple's part; he affirms that a shaykh who receives the “hand of discipleship” (*dast-i irādat*) from someone typically claims that “God has brought me to Himself and has given me a state (*ḥāl*) by means of which I can convey others to God”.³⁴

It is important to note, however, that the compiler does not dispute such a claim outright, on doctrinal grounds; he cautions against those who, out of a desire for public acclaim, falsely assert their ability to convey disciples to their goal forthwith, but nevertheless allows that authentic shaykhs with such abilities exist and are saints in this world and the next. What he is careful to do, however, is to set the °Abd al-Khālīqiyān apart from such shaykhs, and from their claims, in communal terms: *irādat* entails difficult conditions and obligations, so difficult that a claim to properly fulfil them is inherently suspicious; consequently, the Khojagān adopt the only responsible course, eschewing *irādat* and holding to the “easier” principle of the *bayʿat*. The course of this argument is somewhat muted with regard to this initial set of alternatives; it becomes more explicit in subsequent sections.

(2) The second contrastive saying ascribed to the Khoja °Abd al-Khālīqiyān³⁵ affirms simply, “For us, the *khānqāh* does not matter; what matters is ardor and pain” (*sūz-ō āh*). In his commentary on this

³³ See the discussion of such communal affiliations in ‘The *Mashaʾikh-i Turk* and the *Khojagān*’ 196-8; and see my ‘Yasavī Šayḥs in the Timurid Era: Notes on the Social and Political Role of Communal Affiliations in the 14th and 15th Centuries’, in Michele Bernardini (ed.), *La civiltà timuride come fenomeno internazionale = Oriente Moderne*, N.S., xv (1996) 173-88.

³⁴ T, f. 244b

³⁵ T, ff. 246b-248a.

point the compiler explains that running ten *khānqāhs* brings no benefit if one's heart lacks "the divine affliction" and the love of God. Once again he does not reject the legitimacy, *per se*, of the practice eschewed by the Khojagān as a group, but in this case he weaves a more pointed critique of fraudulent shaykhs who merely make a show of maintaining a *khānqāh* into his explanation of why the Khojagān avoid the practice.

In this case, the compiler acknowledges the possibility of legitimate rights and duties in maintaining a *khānqāh*, since the claim implicit in that practice — that "God has given me a state (*hāl*) in thankfulness for which I have built this *khānqāh* in order to serve and provide bread for the servants of God" — might be authentic; he even describes some of the conditions, affirming that the central responsibility of the *khānqāh-dār* is to provide bread to the people (since the *khānqāh* without bread is merely a lifeless form), and noting that a fuller account appears in another of his works. He once again makes it clear, however, that the difficulty of properly fulfilling the conditions for *khānqāh-dārī* is one reason the Khojagān refrain from it (at least rhetorically). He likewise cautions against those who build a *khānqāh* merely "to make a show of shaykh-hood and grandeur and to deceive the people", since in such cases "that *khānqāh* of yours will become one of the pits of hell for you" on the Day of Judgment.

Once more, it is not the legitimacy, or even the value, of such a function that is questioned here, but rather the implicit identification of *khānqāh*-maintenance with purely formal or fraudulent shaykhs, an identification that made even sincere shaykhs susceptible to criticism and therefore encouraged the Khojagān to highlight their communal identification with the principle held up as the rhetorical alternative to maintaining *khānqāhs*. As in the case of the other rhetorical alternatives posed here, the activities from which the Khojagān seek to dissociate themselves (at least discursively, through these sayings, but perhaps in practice too) are, implicitly, indistinguishable, in their external forms, from the activities of fraudulent pseudo-Sufis, and herein — as well as in the assumption that it is precisely the prevalence of fraudulent shaykhs that makes it incumbent upon authentic shaykhs (the Khoja °Abd al-Khālīqiyān) to avoid any possibility of confusion by abandoning the activity altogether — lies the meeting-place of rhetorical dialectic with the actual historical environment of the Khojagān.

(3) The next saying³⁶ of the *aṣḥāb* of Khoja ʿAbd al-Khālīq opposes a standard, and ancient, symbol of Sufi transmission to a principle that was to become a hallmark of later Naqshbandī ideals and practice: “For us what matters is not the Sufi cloak (*khirqā*); what matters is the craft (*ḥirfa*)”. This saying the compiler explains in terms of the basic Muslim requirement to eat and wear lawful (*ḥalāl*) things, for a principled observance of this requirement, the compiler insists, can only be ensured by obtaining food and clothing through a lawful craft or occupation. In explaining the reason the Khojagān insist upon a craft, however, the compiler never elaborates upon why this particular practice is opposed to a concern for the *khirqā*, aside from affirming that while one can do without a *khirqā* without occasioning sin, one cannot do without a licit craft without rendering his food and clothing of at best doubtful lawfulness. Nearly all of his discussion is in fact focused upon the status of food, and it may be that the initial mention of clothing was a subtle way of linking the two contrasted items, the craft that provided the lawful means to procure the requirements for life, and the item of clothing whose symbolic value he acknowledges, but whose necessity he rejects.

In this regard we again find the compiler devoting considerable attention to the principle rejected by the Khojagān; he gives some account of the conditions for donning the *khirqā*, and distinguishes two types, the “*khirqā* of the attainment of perfection” (*kasb-i kamāl*), signifying the completion of his training, and the “*khirqā* of blessing” (*tabarruk*), whose *barakat* will assist the disciple in reaching his goal. In this way, once again, the compiler acknowledges that the thing disavowed by the ʿAbd al-Khālīqiyān — in this case the transmission of the *khirqā* — is permissible, but affirms that the difficulty it entails (in caring for the *khirqā* and observing the customs associated with it) is the reason for its rejection by the Khojagān; likewise, he adopts the essentialist approach evident in his earlier arguments, emphasizing that it is the “spirit of the *khirqā*” rather than its form that is important, and that the lack of a *khirqā* does no harm to one who gains that which is the aim (*maqṣūd*) of the *khirqā*. The rhetorical pattern thus resembles what we find in the case of the other alternatives posed so far: the one adopted by the ʿAbd al-Khālīqiyān is portrayed as essential and attainable, while the one imputed to the groups from which the ʿAbd al-Khālīqiyān distinguish

³⁶ T, ff. 248a-253a.

themselves is cast as non-essential (and potentially injurious, if too much effort is devoted to it, to what is truly important), difficult, and subject to so many conditions for proper “management” that the very claim to maintain it is immediately suspect as hollow pretense or conscious deception. The alternative implicitly ascribed to everyone but the Khojagān is, in effect, legitimized in principle but rejected in practice.

The likelihood, further, that “practice” was recognized as having been considerably complicated by the specific environment in which the ʿAbd al-Khālīqiyān were operating is suggested by the compiler’s treatment of the issue of lawful food and occupation. He specifically cites the danger of depending upon people of doubtful legal status for food as the chief incentive to obtain one’s sustenance through one’s own licit occupation, but his remarks are plainly addressed to a particular historical context. What is clear from his discussion is not only that life in Transoxania, from the thirteenth century to the early fifteenth, presented the pious Muslim with the challenge of dealing with individuals of “questionable” legal status at nearly every turn, as a legacy of Mongol rule, but that in such a society, there were clear external, communal markers by which to judge whether the food of certain individuals was permissible or not; for he mentions, as examples of “those whose external circumstances provide evidence that they are not among the people of piety and restraint”, the *tamghāchiyān* (the collectors of the Mongol tax on commerce and craft production, a common target, as contrary to the sharia, of Muslim complaints), the *nūkarān-i ḥākimān* [the military attendants (Mongol “*nöker*”) of governors or rulers], officials (ʿ*amal-dārān*), “oppressors and their sycophants” (ʿ*awānān wa ʿawān-parastān*), and “some of the people of the *bazar*”, as well as certain innovators and sinners.

Herein, once again, lies the link between the compiler’s dialectical overturning of the importance of the *khirqā* and the communal emphasis of the Khojagān upon the *ḥirfa*. In the social and political environment in which community of the ʿAbd al-Khālīqiyān took shape, the lawful occupation they emphasized offered insurance against violating dietary restrictions, and more generally against undue contamination not only by those directly associated with Mongol rule, but also by those induced by the prevailing non-*sharʿī* social regime to relax their observance of Muslim norms; those who instead appealed to the Sufi *khirqā* as a sign of legitimacy were implicitly assigned to the latter camp. The Khojagānī community offered, in effect, a conscious appeal to the maintenance of the social

norms of Islam, by stressing a lawful occupation for its adherents; at the same time, it presented a stark contrast to the social environment of other Sufi communities, in which the *khirqā* had become one of the chief external, physical symbols of Sufi transmission displayed as evidence of legitimacy. This, at least, seems to be what is implied by opposing the *khirqā* to the *hirfa*; that this is indeed the most likely intention is more clearly evident in the fourth pair of contrasted principles.

(4) The last contrastive pair discussed in the work again targets a standard feature of institutional Sufism, namely the appeal to legitimization through the notion of a lineage of shaykhs.³⁷ The *aṣḥāb* of the *khānawāda* of Khoja ʿAbd al-Khāliq, we are told, say, “For us the ‘tree’ (*shajara*) does not matter; it is the fruit (*thamara*) that matters”. The *shajara*, explains the compiler, is the document given by the master to the disciple in acknowledgment that the latter has attained the final goal and is authorized to show the Path to others; though he specifically uses the term *ijāza* at one point, for the compiler the *ijāza* is merely a part of the *shajara*, and it is clear that what he has in mind is a certificate that not only “licenses” a disciple, but also affirms his relationship to a specific lineage of shaykhs. As in the earlier cases, the *shajara* is not delegitimized as such, but is devalued through an essentialist argument: at the Resurrection, we will be asked about the spiritual fruits we manifested, not about our *shajara*, the compiler declares, and obtaining a thousand *shajaras* from various shaykhs will bring no benefit unless the “divine anguish” finds a place in our hearts. The compiler laments the prevalence of hollow claims to shaykh-hood, based on a piece of paper, as well, and compares one who displays a *shajara* without in fact fulfilling the conditions it entails to someone who erects a banner over a dog’s grave to induce the people to come to the site on pilgrimage.³⁸

Once again, then, the pattern is repeated: transmitting a *shajara* is legitimate but is surrounded by so many requirements and conditions that it is difficult, and even impossible in practical terms, to do so properly; transmitting or receiving a *shajara* to a disciple who has not actually attained the status it is rightfully intended to symbolize

³⁷ T, ff. 253a-255b.

³⁸ T, ff. 253b-254a. The motif of the dog’s grave treated as a shrine is especially widespread in Khorezm, and appears to go back to legends circulated about Najm ad-Din Kubrā; a fuller study of its various manifestations is in preparation.

is fraudulent and condemns those involved to damnation; and what matters in any case is not the *shajara* itself, but the spiritual fruits of real mystical attainment, which according to the compiler consist of “adorning the soul with the injunctions of the sharia, the conduct of the *ṭarīqa*, and the illumination of the *ḥaqīqa*”. Hence the ‘Abd al-Khālīqiyān emphasize the spiritual fruits and dispense with the *shajara*. The argument, as before, rests also on the social and religious context in which Sufi communities appealed to formal symbols such as the *shajara* or the *khirqā* to affirm their legitimacy; the Khojagān, in rejecting those symbols as not only non-essential, but as more often than not concealing frauds and charlatans, adopt the rhetoric of those who appealed to spiritual efficacy as the key to sanctioning their communal identity,³⁹ but also adopt the rhetoric of those who denounce Sufism in general as a refuge for deceivers and pretenders.

The *Manāqib* of Khoja ‘Alī ‘Azīzān Rāmītanī clearly deserves closer study, but what we have seen of it lends support to the supposition, rooted in other early sources as well, that the Khojagānī communities of the thirteenth to early fifteenth centuries presented themselves as alternatives to established Sufi groups active in Transoxania, and employed both the structure and the specific content of anti-Sufi rhetoric to drive home the distinctiveness they sought to claim for themselves. The compiler takes up, especially, four markers of the type of organized Sufi activity prevalent in Central Asia in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and early fifteenth centuries, before the final crystallization of distinct and self-conscious Sufi orders, and one by one dissociates the legacy of the Khojagān from each of them.

The opposition of early Khojagānī and Naqshbandī circles to what had become the standard external and conceptual trappings of Sufi communities — including the *khānqāh* as a Sufi community’s institutional base, symbols of initiation and successorship such as the

³⁹ Groups of this era adopting similar appeals to spiritual efficacy of their path include communities whose very names reflect the primacy of a particular method or style of spirituality, such as the Khalwatiyya, ‘Ishqiyya, Shaṭṭāriyya, and Uwasiyya (see my comments in ‘An Uvaysi’ Sufi’ 34-35); but the rhetorical value of such appeals is perhaps best demonstrated by their echo among communities, such as Kubrawī and Yasawī groups, that otherwise claimed legitimacy through *silsila* ties, hereditary links, or other principles of succession and/or authoritative transmission (see ‘The *Mashā’ikh-i Turk* and the *Khojagān*’ 194-8, and for a Kubrawī example, my ‘Sayyid ‘Alī Hamadānī’ 144-146).

handing down of the *khirqā* or the *shajara*, the notion of absolute surrender to the shaykh's will implicit in the principle of *irādat*, and in general a proclivity for emphasizing the mystical path over (or instead of) observance of the sharia (a tendency to which we may assume the shaykhs most active among the Islamizing nomads were most susceptible) — went well beyond what the later attacks on the practices (*raqṣ* and *samāʿ*^c, vocal *dhikr*, etc.) or organizational principles (hereditary shaykh-hood) of rival Sufi communities entailed. To some extent we might see in this broader critique simply the perennial tension between the spiritual aspirations of Sufism and its formal structures and symbols as adopted in institutions that are, after all, human. However, more is at work, for the Khoja ʿAbd al-Khālīqiyān, in the compiler's exposition, are repeating elements of a critique of Sufi practice that might otherwise be sustained by outright opponents of Sufism; at the same time, the compiler, at least, affirms the legitimacy, in principle, of the elements of Sufi practice targeted by the Khojagānī sayings, but then in practical terms allows the general validity of the critique by affirming the Khojagānī resolve to avoid whatever is the focus of criticism. That is, the argument proceeds thus: the commentary affirms a normative position of institutional Sufism, that maintaining a *khānqāh*, or transmitting a *khirqā* or *shajara*, can have legitimate purposes and entails serious responsibilities; it also affirms a critique of institutional Sufism, that there are some who maintain a *khānqāh*, etc., merely for public acclaim and personal gain and are thus deficient both in motive and in performance; it recalls, finally, the Khojagānī decision to refrain from maintaining *khānqāhs* and involving themselves with the *khirqā* or *shajara*, implicitly affirming Khojagānī acceptance of the critique of Sufism: the fraudulent use of *khānqāhs*, and of the other elements, is so prevalent, we may assume — or the critique of such fraudulent use so compelling — that the Khojagānī deem it better not to be counted among those who maintain them.

Here we may emphasize that echoes of similar specific positions, especially focused on the Sufi chain of transmission, are found in other Khojagānī and early Naqshbandī sources. There is, for instance, an implicit appeal to charisma, or more properly demonstrated attainment, rather than to lineage, in a comment ascribed to one of Bahāʾ al-Dīn's disciples when asked to whom, among recent shaykhs, his method and path were connected; the disciple's answer amounts to a rhetorical dismissal not only of lineage, but of two centuries of Sufis who included, naturally, all of Bahāʾ al-Dīn's spiritual ancestors as well as his community's rivals: "You speak of

predecessors! For more than two hundred years none of the recent shaykhs of the path have manifested such signs of sainthood as God's favor has bestowed upon Khoja Bahā' al-Dīn!"⁴⁰ Even the very value of a *silsila* (as recorded in a *shajara* handed down within the community) was implicitly challenged, not only when Bahā' al-Dīn himself is cited belittling the value of such a lineage,⁴¹ but above all in the well-known evocation (noted above), by Bahā' al-Dīn (or at least on his behalf), of the principle of Uwaysī initiation; Bahā' al-Dīn's disciples report a *silsila* for him, to be sure, but affirm also that he was an "Uwaysī," having received initiation and training from the spirit of the deceased "founder" of the Khojagān, °Abd al-Khāliq Ghijduwānī.⁴² That the appeal to Uwaysī status may have facilitated Bahā' ad-Dīn's break with elements of the tradition represented by those listed in his fuller *silsila* (or conversely, that the *silsila* was reported for him chiefly to add another strain of legitimacy) is suggested by various intimations that Bahā' al-Dīn's emphasis on the silent *dhikr* was regarded with suspicion by his contemporaries in the Khojagānī tradition.⁴³

If we assume, finally, that the dialectic employed in the *Manāqib* of Khoja °Alī °Azizān Rāmītanī reflects the conscious aim of early Khojagānī communities to highlight their uniqueness as alternatives to the forms of Sufi activity prevalent in Central Asia in the wake of the Mongol conquest, we should expect that in the social and religious environment of Mongol-ruled Central Asia, the communal rivals of these Khojagānī groups were clearly identifiable — by their contemporaries, if less so by us — through the configuration of

⁴⁰ *Nafaḥāt*, ed. °Ābidī, 393.

⁴¹ See, for instance, his response when asked where his *silsila* led: "No one gets anywhere through a *silsila*" (*Nafaḥāt*, ed. Tawḥīdīpūr 386; ed. °Ābidī 391).

⁴² Bahā' al-Dīn's Uwaysī status is explicitly noted in the work of his disciple, Khoja Muḥammad Pārsā [see his *Risāla-i qudsiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Ṭāhiri °Irāqī (Tehran 1354/1975) 14-15, and in Jāmi's *Nafaḥāt*, ed. Tawḥīdīpūr, 384-385; ed. °Ābidī, 390]. The fullest account of the vision whereby Bahā' ad-Dīn's training by Ghijduwānī was sealed appears in one of the earliest hagiographies devoted to him, the *Anīs al-ṭālibīn*, ed. Šāri Oghlī, 88 ff., and the specific evocation of the spiritual style of Uways al-Qaranī, 95-96). For a discussion of the appeal of the Uwaysi notion, see my 'An 'Uwaysī' Sufi in Timurid Transoxania: Notes on Hagiography and the Taxonomy of Sanctity in the Religious History of Central Asia', *Papers on Inner Asia*, No. 22 (Bloomington 1993).

⁴³ See, for example, the "apologies" for Bahā' ad-Dīn's "resumption" of the silent *dhikr* in the *Anīs al-ṭālibīn* 224, and in the *Rashaḥāt* i, 95-97. As noted above, Rāmītanī, and indeed all the figures in Bahā' ad-Dīn's Sufi *silsila* from Rāmītanī's master, Khoja Maḥmūd Anjir Faghnaawī, down to Amīr Kulāl, were identified with the vocal rather than silent *dhikr*.

symbols and practices critiqued in works such as the *Manāqib*. This is indeed what we find, as a fuller study of Yasawī, Kubrawī, and other Sufi communities active in Central Asia from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries will confirm; and such a study must begin with careful attention to the modes of legitimation evoked by these diverse Sufi circles.

Khojagānī legitimacy, we may understand, was argued on the basis of maintaining specific markers of Muslim observance in the midst of a social environment replete with communities and individuals inclined (by tradition or lax public standards) to ignore or devalue those markers. Other Sufi communities, from the Khojagānī perspective, had been too willing to extend the formal symbols of affiliation and participation to groups insufficiently attentive to a rigorous observance of the sharia; this inclusive and, from the Khojagānī standpoint, overly compromising approach to communal affiliation (and to Islamization in general) not only left them subject to attack by the Khojagān (and by others) for legal negligence or innovation, but rendered the traditional Sufi institutions or insignia with which they were identified — the *khirqā*, the *shajara*, the *khānqāh*, and even the formal bonds of discipleship (*irādat*) — no longer suitable as markers of an exclusively Muslim solidarity.⁴⁴ In order to reinforce a vision of Muslim solidarity more attuned to the norms of the sharia — but also simply to highlight the distinctiveness of their community and its vision in rhetorical terms and thereby score points in advancing their cause in the framework of intense communal rivalries — the °Abd al-Khālīqīyān stressed their rejection (or disregard, or transcendence) of those traditional symbols of Sufism.

In effect, however, although the position adopted by the Khojagān appears more restrictive and exclusive, the rhetoric adopted is intended to affirm a more inclusive, all-embracing potential, since the

⁴⁴ Here we may note that we cannot on this basis adopt a simple dichotomy that makes the Khojagān “pro-sharia” and principled Muslims, but their rivals, for example from the Yasawī tradition, lax or overly accommodating Muslims; this is, after all, a self-consciously polemic work, and unless we wish to adopt one vision of Islam as the standard, true one we must recognize that the rivals of the Khojagān understood their more inclusive approach to be entirely appropriate to Islam, and to their own status as Muslims. As for which vision of Islam proved most historically appealing in Central Asia, we may note that the Khojagān, or more properly the Naqshbandīs, managed to adopt many of the accommodating and inclusive tendencies of their rivals while nevertheless portraying themselves, quite convincingly, as rigorous upholders of the sharia.

primary justification for the Khojagānī stance is not the illegitimacy of what their opponents uphold, but merely its practical difficulty. The Khojagānī position is portrayed as less difficult and more accessible to all than the alternative upheld by their rivals; and by posing what the Khojagān reject as a theoretically valid, but extremely difficult, practically inaccessible ideal, only two options remain: an inadequate or fraudulent adoption of the set of principles disavowed by the Khojagān, or the adoption of the path, and the community, of the Khojagān themselves. The choice is clear; and framing the alternatives in such terms as to make the choice self-evident is what this example of Sufi polemic, with its dialectical adaptation of rhetoric and argumentation characteristic of Sufism's opponents, is about.

THE POLEMIC OF “OFFICIAL” AND “UNOFFICIAL” ISLAM: SUFISM IN SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

JO-ANN GROSS

One of the most pervasive concepts defining Islam during the Soviet period is the dualistic concept of “official” and “unofficial”, or “parallel”, Islam:

‘There exist two trends in Sunni and Shii Islam. One is the mosque trend, headed now in our country by the *mufītīs*, the *shaykh al-Islām*, and other officials of the four official Muslim Spiritual Directorates; and the second, an out-of-mosque, communal, Sufi-dervish trend, led by the *īshāns*, *pīrs*, *shaykhs*, and *ūstāds*, the followers of whom live mainly outside the city in *kishlaks* and *auls* (mountain villages). Both trends were formed in the early medieval period, and since that time their leaders have waged a struggle for influence over the believers’.¹

Utilized by Soviet officials, and adapted by Soviet as well as Western scholars studying Islam during the Soviet period, this dualistic concept defined the contrast between the Soviet sponsored Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan (SADUM) and the persistence of Islam on an underground, “unofficial” level.

This binary categorization of Islamic practice and Islamic institutions is a political construct that defined Soviet Muslim identity, marginalized all expressions of Islam outside of the “official” institutional establishment, criminalized popular religious practice, and sanctioned, through ethnographic and scientific means, the continued need to “modernize” Islamic society in order to bring Muslims into the fold of the Soviet nation. It may be argued, in colonial theory, that such binary rigidity produces a monolithic focus on the discourse of oppositionality between Islam and Marxism/Leninism and between Muslim and Soviet identity. Indeed, such categorization does not lend itself easily to an understanding of indigenous religious practice and doctrine, particularly since the predominant textual sources on the practice of Sufism in Central Asia during the

¹ L.I. Klimovich, ‘Borba ortodoksov i modernistov v Islame’, in *Vosprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow 1966) 66. For a slightly different translation, see Alexandre Bennigsen and S. Enders Wimbush, *Mystics and Commissars: Sufism in the Soviet Union* (London 1985) 51.

Soviet period are Soviet. However, an analysis of the concepts of “official” and “unofficial” Islam, through its three main forms of expression — Soviet historiography, ethnography, and propaganda — is necessary for two reasons. First, because Sufism is one of the primary means of authenticating this sense of duality and difference; and second, because Soviet Islam, according to its ideologues, is a system of beliefs devoid of all traces of popular Islam as practiced for centuries in Central Asia. Sufism, according to this view, simultaneously signifies the persistence of both non-Soviet culture and the reactionary, primitive remnants of a backward religious tradition that some Muslims continue to find attractive and meaningful.

The state construction of Muslim identity as the “other” is not new to the Soviet period. In the late eighteenth century, and through-out the nineteenth century, when Russia was emerging as a world empire that would include Catholic and Orthodox Christians in the West, and Buddhists, pagans and Muslims in the south and the east, Russians conceptualized the relationship between themselves (Russian Orthodox) and the “others” (non-Christian), by using the term “*inorodtsy*” (“aliens”).² Muslims, specifically through their language and faith, were seen as distinctively different from the Russians. The assumption, above all, was that the cultural superiority of Russia would inevitably make its mark on her Muslim subjects, and thus assimilation of the Muslim population of the empire into the Russian nation would be accomplished.³ Although the intellectual tradition

² For general works on Russian imperialism, see Włodzimierz Baczkowski, ‘Russian Colonialism: The Tsarist and Soviet Empires’, in Robert Strausz-Hupe and Harry W. Hazard (ed.), *The Idea of Colonialism*, (New York 1958) 70-113; Taras Hunczak, (ed.), *Russian Imperialism from Ivan the Great to the Revolution* (New Brunswick 1974); and Dietrich Geyer, *Russian Imperialism: The Interaction of Domestic and Foreign Policy, 1860-1914*, trans. Bruce Little (New Haven 1977). For sources on Russian rule in Central Asia, see Edward Allworth (ed.), *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview* (Durham 1994); Elizabeth Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule* (Ithaca 1966); Seymour Becker, *Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1929* (Cambridge Mass. 1968); George J. Demko, *The Russian Colonization of Kazakhstan, 1896-1916* (Bloomington 1969); Richard Pierce, *Russian Central Asia, 1867-1917: A Study in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley 1960); Michael Khodarkovsky, ‘Ignoble Savages and Unfaithful Subjects: Constructing Non-Christian Identities in Early Modern Russia, in Daniel Brower and Edward Lazzarini (eds.), *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples 1700-1917* (Bloomington 1997) 9-26.

³ Catherine II's policy of toleration was an exception to this. Her “Toleration of All Faiths” edict, issued in 1773, specifically called for noninterference in Muslim questions, including the building of mosques. By 1785, however, Catherine instituted a policy of state control over the Muslim community in an attempt to regulate its leadership. Alan W. Fisher,

that presumed the difference between the rational, superior West, and the primitive, inferior East (Orient), was not a concept unique to Russia in the nineteenth century, it was carried out with a methodical enthusiasm by Russian administrators.⁴

The methods of assimilating Muslims into the Russian empire in the nineteenth century included conversion to Christianity, educational reform, replacement of religious identity by ethnic identity, and a variety of social programs.⁵ Attempts to Christianize the Muslims were largely a failure, although many thousands of Tatars were converted following the conquest of Kazan in the sixteenth century, and then again in the early eighteenth century. Recent research on the borderlands of the Russian empire, however, reveals not only a Russian failure to delimit Islamic practice and provide the impetus for assimilation, but, particularly in rural and among nomadic societies, that a process evolved of renegotiation of cultural identity as a response to such attempts at assimilation.⁶

Along with imperial administrative policies came another form of ideological posturing in the nineteenth century, namely the science of ethnography and historiography.⁷ Ethnographic treatises,

'Enlightened Despotism and Islam under Catherine II', *Slavic Review* iv (1968) 542-553. For an examination of late nineteenth-century Russian interpretations of Islam in the context of nationalism and the self-determination of Russian culture, see Mark Batunsky, 'Islam and Russian Culture in the First Half of the 19th Century', *Central Asian Survey* ix (1990) 1-27.

⁴ Studies which examine the culture of imperialism include K. Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class under the Raj: Imperial Attitudes and Policies and their Critics, 1793-1905* (New York 1980); Mark Bassin, 'Inventing Siberia: Visions of the Russian East in the Early Nineteenth Century', *American Historical Review* xcvi (June 1991) 763-794; Albert Hourani, *Islam in European Thought* (Cambridge 1991); Z. Longzi, 'The Myth of the Other: China in the Eyes of the West', *Critical Inquiry* xv, no. 1 (Autumn, 1988) 108-131; Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, (Berkeley 1988); and Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York 1979).

⁵ Edward Allworth, 'The 'Nationality' Idea in Czarist Central Asia', in Erich Goldhagen (ed.), *Ethnic Minorities in the Soviet Union* (New York 1968) 229-250; Stephen Blank, 'National Education, Church and State in Tsarist Nationality Policy: The Il'minskii System', *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* xvii (1983) 466-486; Carrère d'Encausse, 'Tsarist Educational Policy', *Central Asia Review* iv (1968) 375-87; Isabelle Kreindler, *Educational Policies Toward the Eastern Nationalities in Tsarist Russia: A Study of Il'minskii's System* (Ph.D. Diss., Columbia University 1969); Chantal Lemerrier-Quellejey, 'Les Missions orthodoxes en pays musulmans de Moyenne et Basse-Volga, 1552-1865', *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* viii, no. 3 (July-September 1967) 369-403, et. al.; Robert Geraci, 'Russian Orientalism at an Impasse: Tsarist Education Policy in Turkestan', in *Russia's Orient* 138-162.

⁶ Agnès Kefeli, 'Constructing an Islamic Identity: The Case of Elyshevo Village in the Nineteenth Century', in *Russia's Orient* 271-291; Virginia Martin, 'Barymta: Nomadic Custom, Imperial Crime', in *Russia's Orient* 249-270.

⁷ For studies on ethnography and the sciences of empire, see D.N. Anuchin, 'O zadachakh russkoi etnografii', *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* i (1889) 1-35; Wladimir

grounded in the secular criteria of ethnicity, provided sanction for the construction of a different kind of identity for Muslims.⁸ Such treatises argued that nomads, “primitive” as they were, adhered to Islam, but in reality, had no faith, whereas urbanites, who based their beliefs upon the moral code of the sharia, were following social customs rather than acts of faith. Nineteenth-century Russian popular historiography, studied in depth by Seymour Becker, provided further legitimacy for the Russian desire to make their Muslim subjects part of the empire.⁹

It is a well known fact that during Soviet rule, antireligious policies transformed the character of Islam in Soviet Central Asia. Along with the virtual destruction of the clergy, the closing and destruction of thousands of mosques, the confiscation of *awqāf*, the closing down of *maktabs* and *madrasas*, the functioning of Sufi *ṭarīqas* was dramatically affected by the closing of shrines and *khānqāhs* and the arrest, and in some cases, imprisonment of shaykhs and *imāms*.¹⁰ The hope for the Soviet administration, as it had been for the Russian imperial administration, was the creation of another utopian ideal — in this case the “new Soviet man” (*novyi sovetskii chelovek*). Muslims remained “the other,” and in need of enlightenment, not through conversion to Christianity, but rather to Marxist-Leninist ideology and to the Communist Party line. The civilizing mission of scientific atheism would not accommodate for loyalty to religion above state.

Echoing the policy of Catherine II, who in 1783 organized the Central Spiritual Muslim Directorate (*Upravlenie*) for European Russia and Siberia (located in Orenburg and later moved to Ufa), Stalin established four Spiritual Directorates.¹¹ He was partly motivated to create support among Muslims for the war effort, but the

Berelowitch, ‘Aux origines de l’ethnographie Russe: La Société de Géographie dans les années 1840-1850’, *Cahiers du monde Russe et Soviétique* iii, no. 2-3 (Avril-Septembre 1990) 265-274; B.M. Dantsig, *Bližnii vostok v Russkoi nauke i literature* (Moscow 1973); Yuri Slezkine (ed.), *Between Heaven and Hell: The Myth of Siberia in Russian Culture* (New York 1993).

⁸ Gregory Eliyu Guldin’s study of the development of the anthropological disciplines in China offers a valuable comparative examination. See Guldin, *The Saga of Anthropology in China: From Malinowski to Mao* (Armonk N.Y. 1994).

⁹ Seymour Becker, ‘The Muslim East in Nineteenth-Century Russian Popular Historiography’, *Central Asian Survey* v (1986) 25-47.

¹⁰ The case of Sufism in post-Ottoman Albania offers a compelling comparative study. See Nathalie Clayer, *Albanie, pays des derviches. Les ordres mystique musulmans en Albanie à l’époque post-ottomane (1912-1967)* (Berlin-Wiesbaden 1990).

¹¹ See Fisher, ‘Enlightened Despotism’ 542-553.

effect of this new official Islamic institution was to create a method of providing a state-sanctioned, narrow, legal status to a “Great Tradition” Islam.¹²

Of the four directorates (namely the Spiritual Directorate of Central Asia and Kazakhstan; the Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of European Russia and Siberia; the Spiritual Directorate of the North Caucasus and Daghestan; and the Spiritual Directorate of the Transcaucasia Muslims) only the Spiritual Directorate of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, centered in Tashkent, is relevant to the subject of this paper.¹³ It should be noted, however, that the ideological stances, as well as the relative importance of the four directorates, were not equal, the Directorate of Tashkent exerting more weight due to its position in serving seventy-five percent of the Muslim population in the Soviet Union.

Within the purview of the Spiritual Directorate was “official” Islamic education, the publication of a journal (beginning in 1968) entitled *The Muslims of the Soviet East*, the proclamation of fatwas, the intermittent publication of writings on Islam, and the publication of the Koran. Along with SADUM came the establishment of two official *madrasas*. The first, the *Mīr i-ʿArab madrasa*, was opened in Bukhara in 1945, and trained approximately twenty clerics per year, most of whom would eventually serve as *imām-khaṭībs* in the official

¹² The “official” administration was actually created at the suggestion of the Mufti of Ufa, Abdurrahman Rasulaev, in his attempt to “normalize” relations between the Soviet government and Islam. Alexandre Bennigsen, “‘Official’ Islam in the Soviet Union”, *Religion in Communist Lands* vii (1979) 148-49. The dismissal of all mystical and popular understandings of Islam was also common in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Western scholarship on the Islamic tradition. In the nineteen-forties, anthropologists made the distinction between “Great” and “Little” traditions. The Soviet marginalization, politically motivated, created an equivalent divide. See Dale Eickelman, “Islam and the ‘Religions of the Book’”, in *The Middle East: An Anthropological Approach*, (Englewood Cliffs 1989) 256-262; id., ‘The Study of Islam in Local Contexts’, *Contributions to Asian Studies* xvii (1982) 1-16. See also Talal Asad, ‘The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam’, *Occasional Paper Series* (Washington, Georgetown University Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1986); Marilyn Waldman, ‘Tradition as a Modality of Change: Islamic Examples’, *History of Religions* xxv (1986) 318-40; Richard C. Martin (ed.) *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies* (Tucson 1985); Abdul Hamid el-Zein, ‘Beyond Ideology and Theology: The Search for the Anthropology of Islam’, *Annual Review of Anthropology* vi (1977) 227-54; and Michael Gilseman, *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East* (London 1992).

¹³ Bennigsen and Wimbush estimate the total number of registered clerics serving the Soviet Muslim community of 45 million as fewer than 2,000, of whom “at least 80 percent observe some Islamic rites.” Alexandre Bennigsen and S. Enders Wimbush, *Mystics and Commissars: Sufism in the Soviet Union* (London 1985) 84.

mosques throughout the Soviet Union. The second, the Imam Ismail al-Bukhari *madrassa* in Tashkent, was established in 1971 as a higher-level *madrassa*, and educated many of those who would serve as religious officials at the directorate level.

“Unofficial,” or “parallel” Islam became a marginal category for all remaining Islamic religious practice that did not fall under the authority of the Directorates, and therefore, under the authority and watchful eye of the Soviet government. Within the category of “unofficial” Islam fell ancestral worship, shrine veneration, pilgrimage to shrines, popular healing, prayer at unofficial mosques, performance of *dhikr*, “unofficial” Islamic education, study of the Koran by anyone other than official clerics, and any other form of Islamic ritual or customary practice. The category “unofficial,” or “parallel” Islam thus denied the core normative religious practices of the majority of Muslims living in the various regions of Central Asia, since all popular Islamic forms of belief and practice, and all religious practitioners other than those trained within the state-sponsored system were considered illegal. As a result of this ideological conceptualization of “Soviet Islam,” therefore, popular Islam¹⁴ was deemed a pariah, and was defined as a vestige of a primitive past, or in conspiratorial terms which projected its potential for

¹⁴ The term “popular” Islam is used with caution and with a recognition of the complexity of Islam in practice. This author does not subscribe to a two-tiered model of religion represented by an essentialist, high tradition Islam and an opposing, ahistorical, low, populist Islam. The term “popular” Islam is used to denote localized Islamic practice that represents a variety of modes of religiosity. However, it must be recognized that although the dichotomous notion of a clear-cut common core of Islamic tradition and an opposing set of localized Islamic practices and beliefs is, in this author’s opinion, a methodologically unsound approach to the study of Islam, in the case of Soviet Central Asia, such an atemporal dichotomy between “orthodox” Islam and “popular Islam” was in fact imposed on Muslim society by the Soviet state. “Official” Islam was a device used by the state to create a two-tiered model that defined orthodoxy and a low, deviant, folk Islam; this dichotomy, moreover, pit Soviet and Muslim identity against one another. For a discussion of the two-tiered model of religion in the context of Latin Christianity, see Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago 1979) 12-22. See also Boaz Shoshan, ‘High Culture and Popular Culture in Medieval Islam’, *Studia Islamica* lxxiii (1991) 67-107. Three recent studies that challenge the two-tiered model as applied to Islam are Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God’s Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period 1200-1550* (Salt Lake City 1994); Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition* (Pennsylvania 1994); and Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760* (Berkeley 1993). Furthermore, in using the term “popular Islam” I do not wish to suggest that Sufism itself is merely an aspect of popular Islam.

centralized, hierarchical, and organized bases of opposition.¹⁵

Historically, Islam in Central Asia is characterized by the predominance of popular religious activity, some of which is Sufi inspired and includes pre-Islamic shamanist and animist beliefs.¹⁶ The study of Islam in Central Asia reveals not only the significance of cultural interaction and borrowing in the formation of religious identities, but the great diversity and syncretism within different Islamic practices, including Sufi communities. Recent scholarship, for example, challenges the Soviet concept of popular Islam as simply the survival of pre-Islamic practices. Sufism undoubtedly played a central role in the religious life of Central Asian society, not only through institutionalized orders, but through the popularity of Sufi saints, legends, and shrines. The importance of the local construction of religious ideas, therefore, is extremely important in trying to assess the “official/unofficial” concept, since for many Muslims, it would seem, this concept was simply irrelevant and meaningless in the theoretical sense of the terms. There was not, as far as can be discerned, any public dialogue between the clergy of the “official” establishment and the “unofficial” clergy, nor any official condemnation of Sufism, although the “official” Muslim clergy in Soviet Central Asia, in fatwas and various publications, had, from time to time, come forward to condemn pilgrimage to holy places.¹⁷ Some Soviet as well as Western analysts have portrayed the

¹⁵ See, for example, L.A. Bashirov, *Puti predodoleniia religionnykh i patriarkhal'nykh perezhitkov* (Groznyi 1975); B.G. Gabisov, *Puti proshlogo* (Groznyi 1965); D. Ikhilov, ‘Perezhitki drevnikh verovaniia i puti ikh preodoleniia’, *Sovetskii Dagestan* (Makhach-Qala 1981); N. Akhmedov, *Proizhozhdenie i vred “sviatykh mest” i ikh pokloneniia* (Tashkent 1959); Ia.K. Durdyeva, *Sovremennaiia ideologicheskaiia bor'ba i religia* (Ashkhabad 1979).

¹⁶ See, for example, O. Murodov, ‘Shamanskii obriadovyi fol'klor u tadjikov srednei chasti doliny Zeravshana’, in *Domusul'manskie verovaniia i obriady v Srednei Azii* (Moscow 1975) 94-122; Chokan Chingisovich Valikhanov, ‘O musul'manstve v stepi’, *Sobranie sochinenii v piati tomakh* (Alma-Ata 1961) i, 524-29; Dewin DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*; M. Demidov, *Sufizm v Turkmenii* (Ashkhabad 1978).

¹⁷ Bennigsen and Wimbush report that in 1959, Ziauddin Babakhanov, the mufti of the Tashkent Directorate until 1982, issued a fatwa in which he proclaimed “ishanism” to be a “trend alien to Islam.” Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics* 41. However, as far as I have been able to ascertain, this is the only direct condemnation published. It should be noted that this was the height of Krushchev's anti-religious campaign. Ziauddin Babakhanov also published a number of fatwas condemning pilgrimage to holy places. References to these fatwas are found in Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics* 41-42. The original texts may be found in I.A. Makatov, ‘Kul't sviatykh v Islame’, *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma iii* (1967) 173-75, and in *Muslims of the Soviet East*. Most of the fatwas condemn pilgrimage and meeting at *mazārs* as a violation of sharia. For example, Haji Kurbanov, mufti of North Caucasus and Daghestan, stated, “Our

official clergy as vestiges of the *jadid* Islamic modernist tradition, working to reconcile Islam with the realities of Soviet life.¹⁸ This interpretation is based upon the argument by the “official” clergy that the social values of Islam do not conflict with, and in fact are compatible with communism. To be a practicing Muslim in the Soviet Union, is therefore, to be working for the benefit of Soviet society.¹⁹ The former mufti of the Tashkent Directorate, Ziauddin Babakhanov, states, for example:

‘Islam teaches that there are close social links in society, that people depend on one another. The work of each man is a contribution to the good of society, i.e. society as a whole benefits by the results of the work done by each member of society. Hence, it is the duty of every citizen to work conscientiously, aiming at the highest possible quality. The Prophet Muhammad — peace be upon Him! — said in this connection: “The best of men is he who is of the greatest use to people”.²⁰

Since virtually all information on Sufism must be based upon Soviet sources, defining Sufism and Sufi communities in Soviet Central Asia is especially problematic.²¹ It is, moreover, unwarranted to make assumptions about the organization, doctrine, and leadership of Sufi groups as they existed during the Soviet period, based upon the historical tradition of any one specific *ṭarīqa* or *silsila* and/or the Soviet ethnographic evidence pertaining to it.

Prophet said that those people [who meet at a *mazār*] are sinners. He also said that during the pre-Islamic era of ignorance, when a man died, great honours were bestowed on him, a temple was built and people would pray at his image. This is paganism and those who practice it will have to answer on the Day of Judgment.” Quoted from Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics* 41.

¹⁸ Muriel Atkin, *The Subtlest Battle: Islam in Soviet Tajikistan* (Philadelphia 1989) 18–19; Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics* 45; A. Akhmedov, *Sotsial’naia doktrina islama* (Moscow 1982); R.M. Madzhidov, ‘Modernistskie tendentsii v islame v usloviakh sotsializma’, *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (1981).

¹⁹ Atkin, *The Subtlest Battle* 19.

²⁰ Ziauddin Khan Ibn Ishaan Babakhan, *Islam and the Muslims in the Land of Soviets*, trans. Richard Dixon (Progress Publishers 1980) 87.

²¹ The study of Islam in modern Central Asia, particularly from the eighteenth century to the present, remains in a formative stage. For a fairly reliable source on Sufi shaykhs in nineteenth-century Central Asia, see N.S. Lykoshin, ‘Rol’ dervishei v musul’manskoi obshchine tashkentskikh tuzemtsev’, *Sbornik materialov dlia statistiki Syr-Dar’inskoi oblasti vii* (1899) 94–136. Given the more open atmosphere for research in the post-Soviet environment, access to sources and new opportunities for field research yields the possibility for a new appraisal of Sufi communities. The work of Baxtiyor M. Babadzanov represents some of the best current research on Sufism among Uzbek scholars. See Baxtiyor Babadzanov, ‘On the History of the Naqšbandiyya Muğaddidiyya in Central Māwarā’annahr in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries’, in Michael Kemper, Anke von Kügelgen, and Dimitriy Yermakov (eds.), *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Century* (Berlin 1996).

Given the infantile stage of scholarship on Central Asian Sufi communities in the modern period, such connections (both spiritual and genealogical) are unclear and the evidence that there is a continuity in the character of such groups is often nebulous. During the Soviet period, communities linked with four Sufi orders were active in Central Asia, all of which have a long history in the social and cultural history of Central Asia. The predominant *ṭarīqa*, the Naqshbandiyya, can be found in almost all regions of Central Asia, although its activities in Daghestan, eastern Chechnia, and the Ferghana valley have drawn unbalanced attention due to the activism of the order and its history of antigovernment opposition. The Qādiriyya is found primarily in the Northern Caucasus and in the Ferghana Valley, but also in Tajikistan. Once again, the activism of the Qādiriyya in Chechnia and the Daghestan regions has dominated the focus of Soviet as well as western studies. The Kubrawiyya, although centered in Urgench, was present in the Turkmenistan SSR and in the Khorezm region. Yasawī communities can also be found in the Ferghana valley and southern Kazakhstan. These communities have drawn the attention of scholars and atheistic propagandists primarily because of reports concerning the so-called radical, politicized “and “Hairy Ishan” (*Chachtuu Ishander*) groups in the Kirgiz SSR.²²

Based on Soviet sources, it appears that the Sufi groups in Soviet Central Asia provided Sufi leadership as well as a local network of Sufi relationships; however, such conclusions must be approached with caution, since there is little evidence for any institutionalized, centralized hierarchy or extensive interregional organization (unlike the Caucasus model) other than the local familial and dynastic connections that established Sufi pirs had forged for generations, and the *pīr-murīd* relationships based on discipleship and learning. Rather, Sufi-related activities appear to be associated with local

²² Bennigsen categorizes both the Laachi and the “Hairy Ishans” as offshoots of the Yasawiyya. Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics* 80. Bennigsen’s claim is based primarily on the work of Satybaldy Mambetaliev, *Sufism jana anin Kirghizstandagi agimdari* (Frunze 1972) 150-51. DeWeese critiques Bennigsen’s interpretation, emphasizing his misreading of Mambetaliev’s findings as well as his false logic regarding the link to the Yasawi Sufi order. Devin DeWeese, *The Yasavi Sufi Tradition* (forthcoming) 682-85. DeWeese’s recent research reveals that there is virtually no evidence of any *silsila* connection between these groups and the “historically attested Yasavi *silsilah*.” I am grateful to Devin DeWeese for making this manuscript available to me, and for sharing his ideas with me. See also Devin DeWeese, ‘The Mashā’ikh-i Turk and the Khojagān: Rethinking the Links between the Yasavi and Naqshbandi Sufi Traditions’, *Journal of Islamic Studies* vii (1996) 180-207.

communal traditions of saint worship, pilgrimage to shrines, healing, religious education, and the performance of prayers at festivals and traditional family ceremonial occasions.

Notwithstanding the ideological barriers to the study of Islam in Soviet Central Asia, Soviet writing on Sufism expanded significantly between the 1960's and 1980's in two main forms: that of antireligious propaganda, and that of scholarly research.²³ Continuing a premodern tradition in Russian historiography, much of the research was done by ethnographers and sociologists, and forms the data base for Western interpretations on Islam in the Soviet Union. Antireligious propaganda comprises books, pamphlets, periodicals such as *Nauka i religiia* (*Science and Religion*), and daily newspapers, all of which echo the Communist Party line and official antireligious policy. These sources predictably present Sufis as fanatics, as threats to society, as social ingrates, and as enemies of the state. The scholarly journal, *Voprosy Nauchnogo Ateizma* (*Questions of Scientific Atheism*) regularly published material on "unofficial Islam". During periods of more intense antireligious campaigns, such as during the Krushchev campaign in the late nineteen-fifties and nineteen-sixties and during the early and mid-nineteen-eighties following the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, atheistic literature abounded with disparaging descriptions of holy men.²⁴

In many of these publications little distinction is made, if any, between particular Sufi orders. Holy places and Sufi *ishāns* are often the focus of accounts, and usually accentuate the need to control and, in effect, to eradicate their presence. One example of such reporting is described by H.B. Paksoy in his article on an account in the Uzbek newspaper, *Sovet Ozbekistani*, in September 26, 1982.²⁵ Although Paksoy's purpose was to show that such newspaper accounts of ar-

²³ Bennigsen and Wimbush provide a listing of publications through the early 1980's; see *Mystics* 164-80.

²⁴ See, for example, M. Agaev, *Tainy sviatikh mest* (Ashkhabad 1967); O. Alpaev, *Din zhana anyng zvianduulugu* (Frunze 1980); S. Aristanbekov, *O Kharaktere proiavlennii pereshitkov Islama v Sovremennykh vsloviakh* (Frunze 1989); A. Doe, *Islam zhonundo chyndyk* (Frunze 1975); A. Kadyrov, *Prichiny sushchestvovannia i puti preodoleniia perezhitkov Islama* (Leninabad 1966); et. al. For further discussion of Soviet atheistic propaganda and religious activities, see Timur Kocaoglu, 'Islam in the Soviet Union: Atheistic Propaganda and 'Unofficial' Religious Activities', *Journal, Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* v, no. 1 (1984) 145-152, and by the same author, 'Recent Reports on Activities of Living Muslim 'Saints' in USSR', *Radio Liberty Research*, no. 346/83 (15 September 1983) 1-5; and Marie Broxup, 'Islam in Central Asia Since Gorbachev', *Asian Affairs* (1987) 283-293.

²⁵ H.B. Paksoy, 'The Deceivers', *Central Asian Survey* iii (1984) 123-131.

rests of “deceivers” such as the one in the September 26th newspaper, reveal much about the existence of an Islamic *samizdat* or underground press, the newspaper report is fairly typical of such accounts in that it attacks religious practice, describes the apprehension of the culprit, and reinforces the illegality of such activities. The article was entitled, “The Deceivers: Comments after the Court Hearings”, and was signed “Adabiyatcu”. or “one involved in literature”.²⁶ Included in the description is an account of a Mr. A. Saidorihocaev’s arrest for selling underground literature, namely a book entitled, “About the Muslim Religion”. The article also reveals a network involved in the printing and distribution of other underground literature and the distribution of cassette tapes of *namāz* prayers and the Koran; a “false mullah”, named Saidherim Azamov, who was teaching religious courses in a *maḥalla* (neighborhood) of Tashkent; and the illegal activity of a “false healer” named Devran Buronov.²⁷ Nowhere does the article specifically state that these individuals were Sufis, although Paksoy concludes that “Quite possibly the culprits are part of a Sufi group, which would assure clan-destinity and enhance the project’s outreach”.²⁸ Antireligious propaganda such as this served the obvious purposes of restating official Soviet policy and reinforcing the illegality of its practice.

Soviet scholarship on the subject of Sufism, however, does not only reflect Soviet religious policy and provide support for atheistic propagandists. The work of historians, ethnographers, and sociologists provide the careful reader with a tremendous amount of detail concerning local Islam, however efficacious the constraints of ideology are for the writer.²⁹ As one Soviet scholar states, “Since the 1930’s...we have practiced Islamic studies in *taqiyya* [concealment]. In writing about Islam, we had to attack it. In a general book on the *Myths of World Peoples*, I had to fight to capitalize Allah”.³⁰

Soviet studies of Sufism are not always consistent in their appraisals. Almost every study of Sufism published between the nine-

²⁶ Ibid. 123.

²⁷ Ibid. 128-129.

²⁸ Ibid. 125.

²⁹ See, for example, the work of S.M. Demidov, *Sufizm v Turkmenistane — Evoliutsiia i perezhitki* (Ashkhabad 1978); L.I. Klimovich, *Islam* (Moscow 1965); and ‘Kul’t sviatykh v Islame’, *Nauka i religiia* (Moscow 1958) 48-52; T.S. Saidbaev, *Islam i obshchestvo* (Moscow 1978); and O. A. Sukhareva, *Islam v Uzbekistan* (Tashkent 1960).

³⁰ Dale Eickelman and Kamran Pasha, ‘Muslim Societies and Politics: Soviet and U.S. Approaches — A Conference Report’, *Middle East Journal* xl, no. 4 (1991) 634.

teen-sixties and the early nineteen-eighties includes a chapter that describes ways of overcoming the “survival” of Sufism. While most studies conclude that Sufism is a vestige (*perezhitki*) of primitive, folk religion, scholars such as Sukhareva assert that Sufism, unlike “orthodox Islam”, is open minded and antifeudal in its popular base. Demidov, in his classic study, *Sufism v Turkmenistane*, provides ethnographic data on the evolution of Sufism in Turkmenistan, and describes “*ishanism*” as a particular form of Central Asian Sufism that culminates in the degenerate growth of personal authority, prestige, and privilege.³¹ Sukhareva, in *Islam v Uzbekistan*, written in 1960, characterizes Sufism as a mystical tendency of Islam that is particularly syncretistic and flexible.³² She describes three levels (*stupen*) through which the Sufi must advance to attain his ultimate goal:

‘At the first (*sharī‘a*) level the murid observes the institutions of “official” Islam, which at the second level (*tariqa*) he must lose. At the next level a person comprehends the essence of all things. At the very highest level (*ḥaqīqa*) he reaches the knowledge of the divine being and total bliss by the means of his ecstasy (*ḥāl*)’.³³

Participation in the first level of the religious life, according to Sukhareva, is the “norm of official religion” — of “orthodox” Islam — which opens the possibility for Sufism and Islam to merge, thus turning Sufism into a form of state religion identified with the land of the Muslims. The second level, according to Sukhareva, is the most admirable, since it is here that the Sufi is freed “from the dogma of ‘official’ religion”. In this way Sufism serves as a form of protest against “official” religion through a denial of its rites.³⁴

According to Sukhareva, Sufism loses its spirit of protest against the “orthodoxy” of Islam during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when it goes through a reactionary phase. It is during this period that Sufism takes on “the most rough, most primitive form of intellectual obscurantism”.³⁵ And thus, her conclusion that “Sufis practice the most backward, barbaric rites, and support the most vicious religious oppression. Sufism poisons the minds of our citizens with the opium of religion”.³⁶ Sufism, in this final Marxist analysis, thus marks an important stage during which Islam penetrates popular life, but ultimately, spiritually enslaves the masses

³¹ Demidov, *Sufizm v Turkmenistane* 105.

³² Sukhareva, *Islam v Uzbekistane* 44.

³³ Ibid. 45.

³⁴ Ibid. 45.

³⁵ Ibid. 58.

³⁶ Sukhareva, *Islam v Uzbekistane* 58.

and poisons the minds of Soviet citizens.

The folk embodiment of Sufism, through various cults and forms of ancestor worship, is another focus of interest for Soviet scholars studying Islam and Sufism. The work of V.N. Basilov and S.M. Demidov on the Turkmen, for example, provide studies of the saint cults, although they also approach the subject matter from the perspective of cultural survivals and reflections of the primitive nature of Turkmen society.³⁷ According to Bennigsen and Wimbush, among all the Soviet Central Asian republics, the most active Sufi *ṭarīqas* and the greatest number of working holy places are found in Soviet Turkmenistan. They attribute the high level of religiosity in Turkmenistan to the numerous “parallel” Islamic institutions, which include pre-Islamic sanctuaries; tombs of former rulers; ancestors, some of whom are believed to be Sufi shaykhs; mythical beings; and martyrs of the “Holy War” against the Russians.³⁸ Among the important *mazārs* is the tomb of the Khwājagānī shaykh, Khwāja Yūsuf-i Hamadānī. This tomb was protected by the Muslim Spiritual Board since it is located very close to a working mosque, and was considered an historical monument. Turkmen legend purports that the ancestors of the *ovliad* (the “sacred tribes”, such as the Khoja, Shikh, and Ata) were descended from the first four caliphs of Islam. The Ata tribe also claims descent from Yasawī saints, including Aḥmad Yasawī himself.³⁹ The *ovliad* also provide the important role of guarding the tombs of saints. According to Demidov, some Turk-

³⁷ See B.N. Basilov, *Kul't sviatykh v Islame* (Moscow 1970); Demidov, *Sufizm v Turkmenistane*, and id., *Turkmenskie Ovliady* (Ashkhabad 1976). For a study unfettered by the ideological constraints of Soviet analysis, but devoted mainly to a listing of *mazārs*, see Joseph Castag  , ‘Le cult des lieux saints de l’Islam au Turkestan’, *L’Ethnographie* xlvii (1951) 46-124.

³⁸ Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics* 138-43. Included among the holy places in Soviet Turkmenistan are the tomb of Kurban Murat, a Naqshbandī shaykh involved in the resistance to the Russians at the Battle of G  k Tepe in 1881; the tomb of Chohan Ata, a Sufi saint of the Yasawīyya order and an ancestor of the Shikh tribe, and the *maz  r* of the founder of the Kubrawīyya, Najm al-D  n Kubr   (d. 1220) located in Konya Urgench. See also Marie Eva Subtelny, ‘The Cult of Holy Places: Religious Practices Among Soviet Muslims’, *Middle East Journal* xliii (1989) 593-604.

³⁹ See Demidov, *Turkmenskie ovliady*; id., *Sufizm v Turkmeni* 48-56; V.N. Basilov, ‘O proiskhozhdenii Turkmen-Ata (Prostonarodnye formy sredneaziatskogo Sufizma)’, in G.P. Snesarev and V. N. Basilov (ed.), *Domusul'manskie verovaniia i obriady v Srednei Azii* 160-168; and V. N. Basilov, ‘Honour Groups in Traditional Turkmenian Society’, in Akbar S. Ahmed and David M. Hart (ed.), *Islam in Tribal Societies: From the Atlas to the Indus* (London 1984) 220-243. A full, critical discussion of the legends and sacred history of the Yasawīyya is found in DeWeese, *The Yasav   Tradition* (forthcoming).

men practice the vocal *dhikr* of the Yasawiyya.⁴⁰ Indeed, the vocal *dhikr* came to be adopted as a part of Turkmen healing rituals in communities in which saints of the Yasavī tradition were quite prominent, indicating the confluence of shamanic performance and Sufi practice. Sufism, in the case of the Turkmen, therefore, is integrally tied to communal and mythical aspects of popular religious life in Turkmen society. In assessing the religiosity of the Turkmen, it is therefore necessary to consider the relationship between the *ovliad*, or “sacred tribes” and the cult of ancestors, both of which are tied to Turkmen tribal social organization.

Evidence of the observance of religious rites and customs that link *murīds*, elders, and clans is also interpreted as a symbol of nationalism that is inherently anti-Russian. Given Soviet nationality policies in Central Asia, which drew boundaries along ethnic lines, the ambiguity between religious, national, and ethnic identity is natural. Holy places and identification with particular Sufi shaykhs can demonstrate a variety of bonds, including ethnic and national ones.⁴¹

Identifying oneself as a Muslim in Soviet Central Asian society necessarily encompassed the ethnic, cultural, and national identity of being a Tajik, Uzbek, or Turkmen, for example, and that often included the observance of a number of cultural traditions commonly associated with Islam and often interpreted by Soviet ethnographers as cultural remnants. If one were a member of the educated elite, however, one’s ideology and world view would most likely be more a product of Soviet education than of the doctrines of Islam. These were the conditions for acceptance, if not success, for Central Asians living within the Soviet system, although the contrast between the rural populations, particularly in terms of their access to “unofficial” Islam and to their identification with it, as opposed to urban educated Muslims, is critical. Herein lies the argument for the linkage of Sufism with rural and tribal society, where the success of Sovietization is assumed to have been less complete or successful.⁴²

⁴⁰ Demidov, *Turkmenski Ovliady* 84-89; 156.

⁴¹ See Anthony Smith, ‘National Identity and Myths of Ethnic Descent’, *Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change* vii (1984) 95-130; Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (London 1969); Dru Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People’s Republic* (Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1991). Recent conflicts in Uzbekistan, for example, have centered around the location of *mazārs* such as Shah-i Mardan in the Fergana valley, a sacred symbol of Naqshbandi resistance against the Soviets in the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties.

⁴² Nazif Shahrani is of the opinion that the Sovietization of Central Asia was more

Whereas the Soviet historiography of Sufism reflects the ideological paradigm that represents a narrow-based, modern, “Soviet Islam”, and rejects, by inference, Sufism as antithetical to the essence of the Soviet state, Western scholarship, necessarily based upon these sources, optimistically viewed the politically unacceptable “unofficial” Islam as the strongest potential for anti-Soviet resistance. Both interpretations are, in effect, political constructs based on an interpretation of the past, and a hope for the future.

The work of Alexandre Bennigsen has had the greatest impact on the Western understanding of Sufism in the Soviet period, and his interpretation of the Soviet concepts of “parallel” and “official” Islam continues to influence the perceptions of Sufism in Soviet Central Asia.⁴³ Through extensive use of Soviet sources, Bennigsen and Wimbush draw a picture of “unofficial” Islam as essentially based upon the Sufi brotherhoods, and as “perfectly structured, hierarchical organizations, with an iron discipline able to challenge the Communist Party”.⁴⁴ In this analysis, Sufism is a “conservative form of Islam”, whose goals “are those of the traditional *jihād*, or “Holy War”, which fights against sin, the infidel rulers, and the “bad Muslims”.⁴⁵

Bennigsen and Wimbush’s characterization of Sufi *ṭarīqas* as secretive, conservative, hierarchical, and closed organizations capable of challenging the Communist Party, however, is based primarily on the Northern and Northeastern Caucasus model of Sufism and, to

successful than most western scholars like to admit. See his ‘Central Asia and the Challenge of the Soviet Legacy’, *Central Asian Survey* xii, no. 2, 123-135. However, it is difficult to deny the resurgence of Islam in the wake of the Soviet-Afghan war in some regions of Central Asia, particularly in Tajikistan. Moreover, Islamic sentiment does appear to have increased among educated urbanites as well. See Broxup, ‘Islam in Central Asia Since Gorbachev’ 289-90.

⁴³ The late Alexandre Bennigsen published extensively on the history of Central Asia. His works on Sufism and Islam in Soviet Central Asia include the following. Alexandre Bennigsen, ‘Les tariqat en Asie Centrale’, in A. Popovic & G. Veinstein (eds.), *Les ordres mystiques dans l’Islam* (Paris 1986) 27-36; ‘Soviet Muslims in the Muslim World’, in S.E. Wimbush (ed.), *Soviet Nationalities in Strategic Perspective* (London 1985); (together with S. Enders Wimbush), *Muslims of the Soviet Empire, A Guide* (London 1985); (together with S.E. Wimbush), *Mystics and Commissars: Sufism in the Soviet Union* (London 1985); ‘Mullahs, Mudjahidin, and Soviet Muslims’, in *Problems of Communism* (1984); ‘Muslim Guerilla Warfare in the Caucasus (1918-1928)’, *Central Asian Survey* ii (1983) 45-106; (together with Chantal Lemerancier-Quelquejay), ‘“Official” Islam in the Soviet Union’, *Religion in Communist Lands* vii (1979) 148-159; (together with Chantal Lemerancier-Quelquejay), ‘Muslim Religious Conservatism and Dissent in the USSR’, *Religion in Communist Lands* vi (1978) 153-161.

⁴⁴ Bennigsen and Wimbush, *Mystics* 155.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 158.

some extent, Turkmenistan and the Ferghana valley, regions in which the Russian conquest was most fiercely resisted and where Sufism continued to be an important symbol of resistance. Indeed, the role of Naqshbandī *murīds* in resistance movements provides a compelling paradigm of Sufi political activism, although again, this activism was confined largely to the Northern and Northeastern Caucasus region.⁴⁶ This association, nevertheless, has provided some of the logic for both the Soviet and the Western association of Sufis with oppositional roles. Such examples include the eighteenth-century Naqshbandī shaykh, Imam Maṣṣūr, shaykh Shāmil of the nineteenth century, the Naqshbandī involvement in the Basmachi revolts of the early twentieth century, the Daghestani revolt of 1920-21, and even the role of Sufism in the organization of Afghan resistance in the Soviet-Afghan war.

A more recent product of Soviet research, published in the wake of *perestroika* and therefore reflecting a new openness in Soviet scholarship, is a work entitled *Everyday Islam*, by the Russian ethnographer, Sergei Poliakov.⁴⁷ The title, *Everyday Islam*, is itself a commentary about just how commonplace “unofficial” Islam was. Although the work is materialist in theory, and the author uses the term “traditionalism” as a force holding back Central Asian society, Poliakov’s discussions of the *maḥalla* (neighborhood organizations) as the central locus of power in local Central Asian society, and the *imāms* of the “unofficial” neighborhood mosques as “the main foundation of Central Asian Islam”, offers an approach that recognizes localized religious practice, familial roles in religious education, the sacred symbolic significance of holy places, and the prestige and authority of the “unofficial” clerics.⁴⁸ According to Poliakov, “Official mosques only represent “government Islam”. “Everyday Is-

⁴⁶ For an interesting alternative approach to the infamous leader of the tribes of the North Caucasus in their struggle against Russian colonization, Shāmil, see Thomas M. Barrett, ‘The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan: Shāmil in Captivity’, *The Russian Review* liii (1994) 353-366. In this study, Barrett examines the Russian representation of Shāmil as “the merging of literary imperialism and state imperialism” in which Shāmil emerges as “both a hero of the Russian imagination and a striking example of the fruits of tsarist expansion.” In fact, a “Caucasus theme” held much cultural appeal following the capture of Shāmil, which resulted in a proliferation of publications on Shāmil, Sufism, and the Russian conquest in the late nineteenth century.

⁴⁷ Sergei P. Poliakov, *Everyday Islam: Religion and Tradition in Rural Central Asia*, ed. with an introduction by Martha Brill Olcott and trans. Anthony Olcott (Armonk, N.Y. 1992).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 107.

lam" has vastly more religious institutions at its disposal".⁴⁹

According to Poliakov, "A *mazar* or holy place, exists in practically every kishlak...Most commonly this is the graveyard, which inevitably has one grave having special respect in which the local "saint" is buried".⁵⁰ "All graves of the clergy, whether official or unofficial, are held to be sacred. Also holy are the graves of administrators of the emirates and khanates and those of the leaders of the Basmachi."⁵¹ He states further:

'New mazars are constantly being formed, but the sanctity of a mazar, unlike a mosque, is not transitory. Mazars are distinguished not only by their beneficial properties, their "powers," but also by their specificity. Some "help avert" infertility, others "cure" jaundice, or ear diseases, or rheumatism, and so forth. But the primary distinction among mazars is their "power," which is determined by the antiquity of the mazar and the degree of its sanctity'.⁵²

Studies in many Islamic societies illustrate the importance of local knowledge of Islam, and the persistence in the practice of Islamic rites and rituals despite isolation from religious centers, illiteracy, or the imposition of political restrictions.⁵³ Soviet Central Asia is a case in point, although, for the majority of Muslims professing Islam in Soviet Central Asia, knowledge of Arabic was scant, and there was little or no access to Islamic literature or doctrinal texts. The focus of religious activity on the local level, therefore, appears to have been centered around holy places, whether they be sacred trees, or the tombs of Sufi shaykhs or a clan ancestor. These are places to which Muslims attach special spiritual meaning. The guardians of such *mazārs*, sometimes a *murīd*, or a shaykh, are reported to preach in public, and to provide for the spiritual needs of the population, whether it be through folk medicine, prayer, talismans, or religious education. A Sufi named Azizkhan Tura Abdalnabi, for example, who lived in South West Tajikistan between 1948-1961 not only built a mosque close to his home and led prayers there, but he built a *khānqāh*, where he performed the *dhikr*, met with his *murīds*, treated

⁴⁹ Ibid. 95-96.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 99.

⁵¹ Poliakov, *Everyday Islam* 100.

⁵² Ibid. 100-101.

⁵³ Dale Eickelman, 'The Study of Islam in Local Contexts', in Richard Martin (ed.), *Islam in Local Contexts* (Leiden 1989) 1-16; Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*; Nazif Shahrani, 'Local Knowledge of Islam and Social Discourse in Afghanistan and Turkestan in the Modern Period', in Robert Canfield (ed.), *Turco-Persia in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, Mass. 1991); Reinhold Loeffler, *Islam in Practice: Religious Beliefs in a Persian Village* (Albany 1988).

the ill, and accepted donations for his services.⁵⁴

Although at this point in our knowledge of Sufism during the Soviet period, it is not possible to accurately assess the persistence of Sufi ties, either dynastic, tribal, or genealogical, there is strong evidence that the families of important religious figures, former members of the ulama, clan elders, and the descendants of the *pīrs* of Sufi orders in Central Asia, particularly the Naqshbandiyya, held special status in Soviet Central Asian society and enjoyed a particular prestige.⁵⁵

According to Poliakov:

'with very few exceptions all of the mullahs and sheiks come from traditional clerical families. It is on this same principle that students are chosen for the underground religious schools....The vitality of these groups should be noted, particularly of the privileges that Muslims acknowledge are due them. Descendants of the heads of the dervish orders also enjoy great respect, particularly those of the Naqshbandiyya order....'⁵⁶ He even goes so far as to assert, 'It may be said with certainty that by now entire *dynasties* of clergy have been founded in Central Asia, primarily in the unofficial sector'.⁵⁷

In the aftermath of the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and the subsequent establishment of the five independent Central Asian states, one of the many transformations taking place in Central Asia today is the visible revitalization of Sufi shrines and *khānqāhs* throughout the region.⁵⁸ The shrine complex of the eponymous founder of the Naqshbandī order, Bahā' ad-Dīn Naqshband, for

⁵⁴ Cited by Muriel Atkin, *The Subtlest Battle* 24.

⁵⁵ Ishan Babakhan ibn Abdul Mejid Khan, mufti of the Tashkent Directorate from 1943-1957, Ziauddin Babakhanov, mufti from 1957-1982, and Shamsuddin Babakhanov, mufti from 1982 until 1989, were all members of the Naqshbandiyya, as is the current mufti, Mukhtarkhan Abdullaev, who was the imām of the Masjid-i Bahā ad-Dīn Naqshband outside of Bukhara prior to his present position. The recent work of Baxtiyor Babadzanov demonstrates the continuation of leadership and families ties among Sufi communities in Uzbekistan. I am grateful to him for making available to me his unpublished paper, 'Vozrozhdenie deyatel'nosti sufiiskikh gupp v Uzbekistane'. See also Hamid Algar, 'Shaykh Zaynullah Rasulev', in Jo-Ann Gross (ed.), *Muslims in Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change* (Duke University Press 1992) 112-133.

⁵⁶ Poliakov, *Everyday Islam* 107.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 109. Such dynastic lineages naturally existed prior to the Soviet period; it remains to be shown how or in what forms such lineages persisted in Soviet Central Asia. For an excellent analysis of the cultural environment of society and community with respect to shrines and dynastic families in Central Asia, see Robert D. McChesney, *Central Asia: Foundations of Change* (Princeton 1996). I am grateful to Robert McChesney for making his study available to me.

⁵⁸ See Thierry Zarcone, 'Le Soufisme en renouveau', *Cahiers de l'Orient* xxx (1993) 131-139.

example, has been refurbished and expanded to include a museum which details the history of the Naqshbandī order, the renovation of the shrine complex, and provides basic information on Islam and Sufism.⁵⁹ Pilgrimage to Sufi shrines has increased significantly, and many of the *mazārs* and mosques associated with Sufi shaykhs are now functioning as local mosques. Along with the restoration, re-opening, and rebuilding of Sufi shrines has come the publication of popular literature on Sufi themes, including poetry and tracts on specific *ṭarīqas* and shrines.⁶⁰

Such recent developments reflect not only a renewed interest in Sufism, but the reformation of a political culture in Central Asia that evokes new meaning for Islam, and for Sufism. The present period of flux and transition in the independent Central Asian states is a volatile one. Political maneuvering will undoubtedly play a role in the future of the new Central Asian states, as old political elites try to maintain power, and new ones vie to replace them. One aspect of the process of change regarding the revival of Islam in Central Asia is the current reformulation of the “official/unofficial” dichotomy. Beginning in the *perestroika* era of the Gorbachev period, liberalization policies introduced the still on-going process of the reinstitutionalization of Islam through the building and rebuilding of mosques and a more open display of religious profession.⁶¹ Although still suspect, “unofficial” Islam began a process whereby it became an anachronism as it was understood during the Soviet period. Some “unofficial” religious leaders have begun to gain legitimacy, although it is not yet clear how the relationship between SADUM and the formerly underground religious leadership will be. Since the late nineteenthies, however, mosque building as well as attendance has become acceptable. Studying the Koran and reading Islamic literature is no longer illegal. And in the wake of the political processes that

⁵⁹ In 1993 a national commemoration was held to mark the 675 anniversary of the birth of Bahā’ ad-Dīn Naqshband. During the same year, the rehabilitation of the Yasawī shaykh, Aḥmad Yasawī began in earnest. A foundation was formed, with the financial support of Turkey, to renovate the mausoleum of Aḥmad Yasawī, and a joint Turko-Kazakh university in Kazakhstan was founded which carries Yasawī’s name. Zarcone, ‘Le Soufisme’ 138.

⁶⁰ During a research trip to Uzbekistan in July, 1994, I was able to purchase a variety of publications on Sufi shrines, sheikhs, and writings in the bazaar, and in book stores, most of which are published in Uzbek. Among them, were Botirkhon Valikhudjaev, *Khoja Ahrori Vali* (Samarkand 1993); *Bakhaiddin Nakshband — yoki etti pir* (Tashkent 1993); Khoja Abdulkholik Gijduvonii, *Vasiyatnoma* (Tashkent 1993).

⁶¹ See Marie Broxup, ‘Islam in Central Asia Since Gorbachev’, *Asian Affairs* xviii, pt. iii (October 1987) for her analysis of Gorbachev’s policies.

have occurred over the past three years, it has been politically expedient to sponsor such openness.

One of the most telling examples of the changed understanding of the dualistic concept of “official/unofficial” Islam is that of the reorganization and decentralization of the Spiritual administration.⁶² Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan have created branches of their own, indicating the increasing political and national significance accorded these organizations and their leadership.⁶³ The boundary between “unofficial” and “official” Islam has lost its earlier meaning, although it may be argued that the legacy of “official” Islam has been perpetuated to some extent through the current government approved muftiate and the new and still evolving network of religious institutions and positions of religious authority. However, now it is the degree of politicization, and the relative moderation or extremism of individuals and groups along the political spectrum (including Islamic parties) that forms the basis of boundaries in terms of what is acceptable or unacceptable within the sphere of religious activity. The degree to which Sufi leaders will be a part of the competition within the new emerging religious class is impossible to determine. However, there is no doubt that the tradition of Sufi-inspired religiosity will remain an important aspect of religious identity in Central Asian society.

In conclusion, the issue in appraising oppositional attitudes to Sufism in Soviet Central Asia is not whether “official” and “unof-

⁶² Abdujabar Abduvakhitov, ‘Islamic Revivalism in Uzbekistan’, in Dale Eickelman (ed.) *Russia’s Muslim Frontiers: New Directions in Cross-Cultural Analysis* (Bloomington 1993) 79-100; and Abduvakhitov, ‘Independent Uzbekistan: A Muslim Community in Development’ (unpublished ms., 1993).

⁶³ Perhaps the most significant change came in 1989, when in Tashkent due to a public demonstration and increasing pressure, Shamsuddin Babakhanov was forced to step down from his position as mufti. See Annette Bohr, ‘Background to Demonstrations of Soviet Muslims in Tashkent’, *Radio Liberty Research Report* (March 17, 1989) for details of this situation. At a *kuriltay*, the rector of the Tashkent Islamic Institute, Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf, was elected to replace him. After one and a half years, however, Muhammad Yusuf was forced to resign after allegations (that were never substantiated) were made that he embezzled donations made by foreign countries for the renovation of mosques and the development of Islamic educational institutions. It is more likely that his independent views riled the Uzbek authorities. According to Mehrdad Haghayeghi, although pro-government religious leaders in Tashkent elected the former mufti, Shamsuddin Babakhan to replace Muhammad Sadiq, Sadiq remained in power until April, 1993, when he was finally forced out and replaced with the present mufti, Mukhtarkhan Abdullaev. Shamsuddin Babakhan is presently serving as the Uzbek ambassador to Egypt. Mehrdad Haghayeghi, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia* (New York 1995) 163-64.

ficial" Islam existed; Islam, undeniably, existed outside the official state-sponsored institutional framework. The issue, rather, is the relationship between the political construction of the concept "unofficial" Islam, and the social reality of Islam as practiced among the diverse Muslim communities in Soviet Central Asia. Our understanding of Sufism in the Soviet period, moreover, is a subject in need of reevaluation. The discourse examined in this brief study concerning the opposition to Sufism in the Soviet period is a reflection of three things: the legacy of Russian imperialist theories of cultural superiority and attempts to assimilate the Muslim peoples into the Russian, and then, Soviet empires; Soviet antireligious policy; and the ideology of Soviet Islam. The binary construct of "official"/"unofficial" Islam may have been an attempt to weaken Islam and control its efficacy, but it was perpetuated out of a combination of frustration and fear at the persistence of popular religiosity and molded by the historical experience of Sufi activism and resistance to conquest in Central Asia, Islamic political activism as expressed through the Islamic Revolution in Iran, and militant Afghan resistance in the Soviet-Afghan war. Ironically, in both Soviet and Western discourse, Sufism became a symbol of resistance to the Soviet state.

LE SUFISME ET “SES OPPOSANTS” AU TURKESTAN ORIENTAL

MASAMI HAMADA

Jean Bottéro, éminent spécialiste des religions de l'ancienne Mésopotamie, donne la définition: la religion est fondé sur le pressentiment qu'il existe, au dessus de nous, et de tout, un ordre de choses supérieur, que l'on appelle “le Sacré”, “le Surnaturel”, ou “le Divin”.¹ Nous l'adoptons et y ajoutons une autre définition pour le mysticisme: le mysticisme est fondé sur le second pressentiment que l'on peut prendre contact ou bien s'unir, soit d'emblée, soit graduellement, avec cet ordre de choses supérieur. Ceux qui sont étrangers à un de ces deux pressentiments peuvent être, du moins théoriquement, les opposants du mysticisme sous toutes ses formes, y compris, il va de soi, le sufisme. Plus précisément les opposants potentiels d'une *ṭarīqa* donnée se composeraient donc (1) de ceux qui n'ont pas le premier pressentiment, c-à-d., des athées ou des agnostiques, (2) de ceux dont la conception du Sacré diffère de celle des musulmans, c-à-d., des “païens”, (3) des musulmans qui n'ont pas le second pressentiment, c-à-d., des ulama “orthodoxes”, reste à préciser les connotations de ces deux mots, ulama et orthodoxie, des wāḥḥābites, et (4) des mystiques musulmans qui suivent une autre *ṭarīqa*. Pour aborder la question chronologiquement, je vais commencer par la deuxième catégorie.

Quand il s'agit du Turkestan oriental qui se trouve sous la domination des “païens” depuis 1680, exception faite notamment pour les années soixantes et soixante-dix du dix-neuvième siècle, ses premiers conquérants n'étaient hostiles ni à l'Islam en général ni au sufisme en particulier. Loin de là. “L'Etat sacré islamique” des *khwājas* kashghariens, ainsi nommé par M. Hartmann, a été créé sous la suzeraineté des bouddhistes Junghars. Certes, ceux-ci chargèrent de lourds tributs les habitants turcophones des oasis et en firent émigrer de force une partie en la vallée d'Ili aussi bien qu'à

¹ Jean Bottéro, ‘L'exorcisme et le culte “privé”’, in Eiko Matsushima (ed.), *Official Cult and Popular Religion in the Ancient Near East* (Heidelberg 1993) 31.

l'est des Altaïs,² mais il n'en reste pas moins que les Junghars n'imposèrent pas leur religion aux sujets musulmans. A l'exception des habitants de Turfan qui se sont enfuis au dedans de la Grande Muraille pour chercher la protection des Qing, nous ne connaissons aucune résistance active chez les musulmans turcophones, du moins jusqu'au commencement des luttes intestines des Junghars causées par la mort de Galdan Tsering en 1745.³

En 1758, l'empereur Qianlong a conquis le bassin du Tarim. En tant que "Fils du Ciel", il se fit le champion de la civilisation du "Milieu" malgré son origine "barbare" et était convaincu de l'universalité de la Voie de Ciel (*Tiandao*). Dans le préface impérial du *Xiyu tongwenzhi* (Compendium des mots synonymes de la Région de l'ouest), il dit:

"Ciel" se dit en chinois *tian*. Il se dit en notre langue nationale (c-à-d., mandchou) *abka*. Il se dit en mongol et en junghar *tenggeri*. Il se dit en tibétain *nam mkha*. Il se dit en langue musulmane *āsmān*. Quand un musulman montre le ciel à un Chinois en disant que c'est *āsmān*, le Chinois ne se met jamais d'accord avec lui. Quand un Chinois montre le ciel à un musulman en disant que c'est *tian*, le musulman, non moins que le Chinois, ne se met jamais d'accord. Bien que tous les deux aient raison d'être en désaccord, comment peut-on se comprendre et se mettre d'accord? Mais quand on lève les yeux vers ce qui resplendit au dessus de nous, s'il s'agit d'un Chinois, il l'honore en tant que *tian*, et s'il s'agit d'un musulman, il l'honore en tant que *āsmān*. Que voilà l'universalité des choses (*datong*). Si les noms des choses (de diverses langues) s'unifient une fois, toutes les choses deviennent mêmes et identiques. Les sages comprennent que tous remontent à l'origine unique, tandis que les imbéciles s'égarent dans les particularités des noms".⁴

Comme son père l'empereur Yongzheng qui a fait éditer et circuler dans tout l'empire un opuscule, *Dayi juemi lü* (*Traité sur la cause qui réveille les errants*), sur l'universalité du Ciel pour réfuter la théorie "raciste" des Chinois selon laquelle les barbares ne peuvent pas recevoir l'ordre du Ciel (*tianming*), Qianlong devait affirmer que l'adoration du Ciel serait universelle, y compris, bien sûr, aux

² Le petit groupe ethnique "Khoton" qui habitent actuellement dans l'*aymag* d'Uvs au nord-ouest de la Mongolie et qui se considèrent musulmans malgré leur croyance et un culte fortement influencés par les Mongols proviennent, du moins une partie d'eux, de cette émigration forcée. Récemment, Vladimir Drimba, 'Sur la classification du khoton', *Turcica* xxiv (1992) 11-25, a étudié de nouveau leur langue pour conclure qu'elle était un dialecte kirghiz méridionale. Une bibliographie sur les Khotons se trouve dans l'article de Drimba.

³ A propos des luttes intestines des Junghars, voir leur historique écrit par l'empereur Qianlong dans P. Pelliot, *Notes critiques d'histoire kalmouke*, Texte, Œuvres posthumes de Paul Pelliot (Paris 1960) vi, 11-12.

⁴ *Qinding xiyu tongwenzhi*, édition facsimilée publiée par le Toyo Bunko (Tokyo 1961) iii-iv.

musulmans. Ce n'est pas la peine ici de reprendre cette ancienne discussion entre les jésuites et les dominicains. Parce que les confucianistes chinois ou mandchous avaient non seulement leur propre conception sur le Sacré, c-à-d., le Ciel, mais aussi leur propre conduite qu'ils se sentaient obligés d'adopter à son égard, c-à-d., le culte, le confucianisme n'est ni plus ni moins qu'une religion d'après la définition de Bottéro. Mais cette “religion”, pour les confucianistes du moins, serait supérieure aux autres et les incluerait toutes. Gong Zizhen, poète et penseur vivant à l'époque de la guerre de l'opium, par exemple, bien qu'il ait eu de la beinveillance exceptionnelle pour les musulmans turcophones et qu'il ait reconnu qu'ils avaient leur propre “livre”,⁵ a proposé d'établir un gouvernement provincial au Xinjiang, d'y construire les temples des divinités du Vent et de la Fontaine pour prier le succès de l'agriculture et d'ouvrir un concours public trente ans après “parce que les émigrés (Chinois), les hommes des Bannières (Mandchous) et les musulmans ne connaissent pas encore bien les “livres” (confucianistes, bien entendu)”.⁶ Parce que Gong Zizhen, convaincu de la supériorité de la civilisation du Milieu, n'a jamais imaginé que sa vision du monde ait été incompatible avec celle des musulmans, il leur a reconnu un droit égal d'apprendre “les livres” et de passer les concours publics. Nous pouvons conclure que, jusqu'au milieu du dix-neuvième siècle, le gouvernement des Qing n'était pas hostile aux musulmans, comme Mullā Mūsā Sayrāmī, historien autochtone dit que

‘De l'antiquité jusqu'au présent, le règlement impérial de la Chine n'intervenait jamais dans les religions des sujets et ne leur recommandait ni la religion impériale ni une quelconque autre. Si on gardait sa propre religion, les empereurs s'en contentaient’.⁷

Mais nous ne pouvons pas négliger un cas exceptionnel très important de l'ordre Jahriyya qui a subi les oppression sanglante dès son apparition dans le Plateau de Loess.⁸

Contrairement à la conviction de l'empereur Qianlong, les musulmans étaient totalement étrangers au culte du Ciel tel qu'il existe matériellement au dessus d'eux et considéraient l'empereur

⁵ Gong Zizhen *quanji* (Shanghai 1975) 312.

⁶ Ibid. 105-111.

⁷ Mullā Mūsā Sayrāmī, *Ta'rikh-i amniyya*, ms Bibliothèque Nationale, Collection Pelliot “B” 1740 (dorénavant TAm), f. 31v.

⁸ Quant à l'histoire de cet ordre de l'intérieur, voir *Xinlingshi* (L'histoire d'âme) de Chang Chengzhi (Guangzhou 1991) et notamment sa version japonais, *Junkyō no Chūgoku Isuramu* (L'Islam chinois martyr) (Tokyo 1993).

comme *kāfir*. Mais en même temps, la classe dominante de la société musulmane qui a obtenu sa place grâce à la force militaire des mécréants se trouvait dans la nécessité de rendre légitime la soumission à l'égard de l'empereur païen. Les personnages influents croyaient, ou bien faisaient semblant de croire que, malgré la tyrannie des autorités locales des Qing, les empereurs eux-même, héréditairement, étaient justes et impartiaux comme Anūshirvān. Parce qu'ils étaient "mangeurs du sel" (*namak-khurda*) des empereurs, ils devaient s'assujettir au "devoir du sel" (*tuz/namak haqqı*) dont l'observance était, d'après eux, "l'obligation universellement reconnue dans toutes les religions". Le terme *tuz etmek haqqı* se trouve pour la première fois, autant que je sache, dans le *Qutadgu Bilig*, mais il est fort probable que l'idée que l'on doit obéir à son bienfaiteur remonte aux temps plus reculés.⁹

Au cour de la révolte qui a commencé en 1864, les musulmans ont détruit des *but-khānas*, temples païens. Auparavant, bien loin de montrer de la répugnance pour les rites païens, la classe dominante les interprétait à sa guise pour affirmer sa position dominante. Sur ce sujet, Mullā Mūsā Sayrāmī raconte une histoire très intéressante. Voici son résumé:

'Parce que la conquête du Turkestan oriental avait été réalisée grâce aux six hommes influents qui avaient cherché la protection de l'empereur et guidé ses armées dans la région, il a fait construire un grand temple à Ushaq-tal et y mettre les images de ces six musulmans. Sur l'ordre de l'empereur, tous les officiers et les marchands (*maymāychi*) venants de la Métropole rendaient visite au temple et adoraient les images en brûlant des papiers conformément à leur manière. Les musulmans appelaient ce temple *Ulugh öy* (la grande maison) et les descendants de ces six hommes se glorifiaient leur extraction en disant que "nous sommes descendants des hommes de la grande maison (*Ulugh öy ādamları*)".¹⁰

Une telle histoire est plus folklorique que réelle et l'existence du temple d'Ushaq-tal même est très douteuse, parce que les sources chinoises qui donnent les listes exhaustives des temples de la région gardent le silence sur celui-ci. Mais nous pouvons en attester un indice dans l'histoire réelle. L'empereur Qianlong a fait peindre les portraits de cinquantes personnes, y compris de quatre musulmans du Turkestan oriental, qui avaient fait des actions méritoires pour la conquête et sur lesquels il a écrit de sa propre main les louanges. Il

⁹ A propos de la notion du "devoir du sel", de son rôle politique et social entre autres, cet auteur a écrit un article en japonais; "'shio no gimu" to "seisen" tono aidade' (Entre "le devoir du sel" et le *jihād*) *Tōyōshi kenkyū* lii/2 (1993).

¹⁰ *TAMS*, f. 25v.

les a faits suspendre dans le Pavillon de la lumière violette construit en 1760 dans le jardin impérial qu'est l'actuel Zongnanhai pour donner des banquets en l'honneur des princes mongols et musulmans aussi bien que des généraux triomphateurs.¹¹ L'imagination des musulmans a combiné ce fait et les rites pratiqués aux temples païens pour inventer une scène impossible mais significative selon laquelle les fonctionnaires des Qing adoreraient les images des musulmans. La conscience du *jihād* s'éveillera un peu plus tard.

Quand il s'agit de la troisième catégorie des opposants potentiels, c-à-d., la tendance opposée au sufisme dans l'islam même, je doit avouer d'abord que je ne peux dire que très peu de choses, parce que nous manquons presque totalement d'informations sur les *ulama* du Turkestan oriental. La culture qarakhânide représentée par le *Qutadgu Bilig* de Yūsuf Khāṣṣ Ḥājib et le *Dīwān lughat al-turk* de Maḥmūd Kāshgharī nous suggère bien que dès l'islamisation les enseignements islamiques ont été solidement implantés dans cette région. La fameuse histoire de ‘Alā’ al-Dīn qui a été martyrisé en face de sa *madrasa* de Khotan¹² montre que cette sorte d'institution était bien établie à la veille de l'invasion de Jengiz Khan. Mais pour le temps plus tardif, à part des biographies des *ulama* enregistrées dans le *Ta’rīkh-i rashīdī*,¹³ le rideau de silence est tombé sur les activités intellectuelles exotériques, tandis que nous avons pas mal de matériels sur l'ésotérisme. Nous devons attendre jusqu'à la deuxième moitié du dix-neuvième siècle pour nous procurer les informations plus ou moins concrètes.

R.B. Shaw, un des premiers occidentaux qui soient entrés au Turkestan oriental sous le régime de Ya’qūb Beg, a trouvé soixante-deux *madrasa* dans la ville de Yarkand dont vingt-neuf étaient en fonction. Selon lui, la plus ancienne d'entre elle, a été fondée en 1497.¹⁴ Le rapport officiel de la mission Forsyth dit qu'il y avait dans chaque ville des *madrasa* qui abritaient de vingt à quatre-vingt étudiants, voir plus. Quant aux enseignements, le rapport dit

11 *Jinding huangyu xiyu tuzhi, tianzhang* (écrits impériaux), vol. iv, f. 4r, 7r-v, 13r-v.

12 al-Juwaynī, *Ta’rīkh-i jahān-gushā*, ed. M. Qazvīnī (London 1912) i, 52-55.

13 Le texte intégral de cet ouvrage, y comprise la partie en question éliminée de la traduction de E.D. Ross, a été récemment édité et traduit par M.W. Thackston en se basant sur les manuscrits de St. Pétersbourg et de Londres: Mirza Haydar Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi, a History of the Khans of Moghulistan*, Persian text; dito English translation and annotation (Harvard 1996).

14 R.B. Shaw, *The History of the Khōjas of Eastern-Turkistan*, ed. N. Elias (Calcutta 1897) 64.

simplement que

‘in all of them the teaching is strictly that of Islam, to the exclusion of everything not allowed by the sharia or unprovided for in the *ḥadīth*’.¹⁵

Le témoignage de F. Grenard sur la ville de Khotan d’après la reconquête des Qing est un peu inique. Il dit:

‘Les médressés ou collèges de théologie, véritables couvents, ont fréquemment plus de professeurs que d’élèves; dans les plus sérieux on apprend le Coran par cœur sans l’entendre, on étudie le droit canon, et l’on explique quelques livres persans faciles comme le *Gulistān*. La plupart des médressés, qui sont nombreuses, sont moins des collèges que des hôtelleries et des réfectoires de moines (cheikhs), dont le meuble essentiel n’est point la bibliothèque, mais la grande marmite de fonte autour de laquelle tout gravite. La valeur et la réputation s’en mesure à la dimension de cette marmite et à la succulence des moutons qu’on y fait cuire’.¹⁶

Et puis au commencement de ce siècle, M. Hartmann a mené une enquête plus détaillée sur place. Selon lui, dans les *madrasa* de Kāshghar et Yarkand on a enseigné d’abord la grammaire arabe, puis le *Hidāya* de Burhān al-Dīn al-Marghinānī et le *Wiqāya* de Maḥmud al-Maḥbūbī, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *tafsīr* et *ḥadīth*, le ‘*Aqā’id* de al-Nasafī, aussi bien que les ouvrages de Jāmī et de Ḥāfiẓ et le *Mathnawī* de Rūmī.¹⁷ En bref, les enseignements aux *madrasas* se composaient du *fiqh* de Ḥanafīyya et de la littérature persane ésotérique. On peut imaginer, sans risquer de commettre une erreur, que ces matières obligatoires étaient constantes depuis toujours; on tenta en vain d’y chercher de véritables opposants contre le sufisme.

Mais au fur et à mesure de la pénétration du jadidisme, sont apparus les ulama orientés vers le modernisme à propos desquels les informations ne sont pas très abondantes non plus. Dans l’état actuel des études, nous ne connaissons que le nom d’un ‘Abd al-Qādir Dāmullā et sa lettre envoyée à la rédaction du journal *Shūrā* publié à Orenburg.¹⁸ D’après le commentaire du rédacteur et une lettre d’un certain Shākīr al-Mukhtārī parue postérieurement dans le même journal,¹⁹ ce Kashgharien fit ses études à Bukhara et resta pour quelques mois en Egypte. Il était auteur de deux ouvrages en arabe, à savoir *Miftāḥ al-adab li-fahm kalām al-‘arab* et *Jawāhir al-īqān*, dont le style très naturel et éloquent fit croire les lecteurs qu’il soit

¹⁵ *Report of a Mission to Yarkund in 1873*, under Command of Sir T.D. Forsyth (Calcutta 1875) 88.

¹⁶ F. Grenard, *Mission scientifique dans la Haute Asie 1890-1895* (Paris 1898) ii, 235-236.

¹⁷ M. Hartmann, *Chinesisch Turkestan* (Halle 1908) 46-52.

¹⁸ ‘Bayān-i ḥaqīqat’, *Shūrā* viii (1915) 721-722. M.Sh. Ōishi m’a informé de cet article.

¹⁹ ‘Dāmullā ‘Abd al-Qādir Ḥaḍrat ḥaqqinda’, *Shūrā* x (1917) 24.

Egyptien ou Syrien. Il a écrit la lettre en question pour contredire un Nazar Khwāja, habitant de Ghaljat, c-à-d., Ghulja, capital de la vallée d’Ili, qui avait visité la ville d’Aqsu et énoncé dans le *Shūrā* un avis très pessimiste sur l’avenir du Turkestan oriental en mentionnant les mauvaises mœurs des habitants; mariages, prostitutions et ventes des enfants pratiqués vis-à-vis des Chinois.²⁰

Dans sa réfutation, ‘Abd al-Qādir a souligné d’abord que l’entrée dans la civilisation se réalisait sous la direction des leaders qui connaissent la vérité et sous les influences des peuples voisins et que les habitants d’Aqsu, aussi bien que les Chinois, étaient les “voisins” de l’est de ceux de Kashghar, de Yarkand et de Khotan qui étaient, à la différence des premiers, toujours fidèles à la religion et à la civilisation transmises par le Farghāna, notamment par la cité sacrée de Bukhara, les voisins de l’ouest. (Pour se défendre, sans aucun doute, il a exclu les Aqsuïotes de son propre peuple. Il est probable que la notion d’un seul d’un unique peuple du Turkestan oriental lui manquait dans ce temp-là). Quant aux leaders, il partage plus ou moins le pessimisme de son adversaire. Il dit que toute la vie quotidienne du pays, religieuse, économique, médicale et des autres genres, était dirigée par les ulama qui considéraient la rénovation et le progrès comme hérésies. “Pour contredire ces leaders, dit-il un peu ironiquement, les procédés usuels ne sont pas suffisants, mais il faut être le possesseur de l’extraordinaire (*khārij-i ‘āda*) ou des miracles (*karāmāt*), tandis que (le miracle) ne se réalise pas peut-être à cause du crime que nous repoussons les *īshāns*...” Ici, les attitudes d’‘Abd al-Qādir vis-à-vis des sufis est très clair. D’après le témoignage de Shākīr al-Mukhtārī, ‘Abd al-Qādir lui a donné un exemplaire de *Rasā’il al-kubrā* d’Ibn Taymiyya, qui est, sans aucun doute, la collection des opuscules publiée au Caire en 1322/1904.²¹

Bien qu’il est vraiment difficile de trouver une tendance opposante contre le sufisme dans le Turkestan oriental pré-moderne, il existait

20 ‘Bizim turmush’, *Shūrā* viii (1915) 585-586.

21 En outre, il n’est pas impossible d’en trouver parmi la collection des milliers de manuscrits recueillis par un établissement du gouvernement de la région autonome qui a un nom très long, “le comité dirigeant la collection, l’arrangement, le planning de publications des anciens documents des peuples minoritaires de la région autonome des Uighurs de Xinjiang”. Ce comité a publié en 1989 un catalogue *Uyghur, özbek, tatar qādimki āsārlār tizimlikī* (Qāshqār 1989) qui contient 1.550 manuscrits en arabe, persan et chaghatay, mais dont les descriptions sont trop simples dans beaucoup de cas pour les identifier ou deviner leurs contenus. Il nous faut attendre encore, pas trop longtemps, j’espère, pour pouvoir obtenir des renseignements plus concrets.

quand même des antipathies non pas pour le sufisme, mais pour les sufis et leurs conduites. Comme je l'ai déjà cité dans un de mes articles, Muḥammad ʿAlī Khān, historien de la grande révolte, reproche sévèrement aux *ishāns* leur avidité en même temps qu'il prie l'esprit de ʿAlī Shīr Nawāʾī de lui venir en aide pour accomplir son ouvrage.²² Et Mūsā Sayrāmī qui était le témoin oculaire des événements de la révolte jusqu'à la reconquête des Qing attribue la perte du pays au fait que les sufis ont saisi le pouvoir politique. Quant à la raison de la première conquête, il dit:

'Depuis que les *khawājams* [Makhdūm-zādas] se sont emparés de ce Yettā-shahr [et] Moghūliyya, ils parlaient et pensaient à la manière de *darwīsh* et ils ne connaissaient pas la situation des pauvres. Les délateurs qui étaient les vrais scélérats se sont approchés des *khawājams* et ils leur ont témoigné grandement leur bonne foi. Mais quand ils sont sorti dehors, chacun est devenu un loup. Comme les loups attaquent les moutons, ils ont endommagé non seulement les biens mais la vie et la foi des pauvres. On appelait ces gens *ʿushshāq*. Parce que les *khawājams* qui menaient héréditairement leur vie de supérieur de l'ordre ne connaissaient ni les affaires de la domination ni les méthodes de la politique, les pauvres sont devenue misérables et ont été ruinés'.²³

En racontant la vie de Ḥājji Pādishāh, c-à-d., Ḥabīb Allāh Muftī de Khotan, Mūsā Sayrāmī développe ses idées. A en juger par les mots de cet historien, Ḥabīb Allāh était un sufi fortement orienté vers la sharia. Son portrait est comme suit:

'Il fit réparer les mosquées et les couvents. Il enseigna aux Khotanais, à savoir, citadins, villageois, grands et petits, hommes et femmes, les préceptes de la sharia et les fit respecter...Il enseigna à tous les bases pour être musulman, les titres du Dieu, qu'il soit loué, et attributs des quatre-vingt-dix-neuf préceptes, des prières, du jeûne, du *zakāt*, du *hajj* et de la science sur les menstrues et les lochies. Il les leur fit apprendre par cœur, réciter et montrer qu'ils les savaient parfaitement. On aurait dit que tout le monde de sept à soixante-dix ans, répétait les leçons et les questions comme de petits écoliers'.²⁴

Mais Sayrāmī le critique parce qu'"il répandait très aisément le sang des personnes" et que "les règlements et les châtiments dépassaient trop les bornes". Il y eut en plus une raison plus forte pour refuser la domination politique de sufi:

'En tout cas, ses ancêtres et en particulier lui-même possédèrent leur métier de *darwīsh*. Au titre de *darwīsh* et *muftī*, ils étaient les dirigeants et les chefs de tous, mais ils ne connaissaient

22 M. Hamada, 'De l'autorité religieuse au pouvoir politique: la révolte de Kūca et Khwāja Rāshidīn', in M. Gaborieau, A. Popovic et Th. Zarcone (éd.), *Naqshbandis. Cheminement et situation actuelle d'un ordre mystique musulman* (Istanbul-Paris 1990) 488-9.

23 *TAm*s, f. 24r-v.

24 *TAm*s, f. 113r-v.

pas les sciences de la domination et du commandement des armées. Les vies de *darwīsh* et de commandant sont incompatibles. S'ils avaient servi un souverain depuis longtemps, appris les sciences du commandement, et montré leur authenticité, ils auraient pris des précautions contre ces événements (c-à-d., la perte de Ḥabīb Allāh). Par conséquent, dans les livres de l'histoire on dit; l'on trouvait les gens, ou bien leurs descendants, qui étaient grands depuis leurs ancêtres très éloignés et qui, en montrant leur authenticité, étaient toujours les dominateurs et les souverains, pour les installer sur le trône et pour leur obéir. Ainsi, grâce à leurs mérites nobles, la sécurité arriva au peuple et l'harmonie visita le pays'.²⁵

Non seulement Ḥabīb Allāh mais aussi les autres dirigeants de la révolte de 1864 partageaient la même tendance, c-à-d., la troisième vague de l'islamisation. Ils ont déclaré que la guerre contre les Qing est devenue un devoir catégorique individuel (*farḍ 'ayn*), autrement dit, ils ont rempli le rôle de l'imam de la communauté islamique qui peut décréter la levée générale (*nāfir 'āmm*). Quand un sufi, orienté à la sharia aussi bien qu'au *jihād*, fait des efforts pour réaliser ses idées, il doit inévitablement en assumer la responsabilité politique et même militaire pour établir un régime religieux sufique par essence. Mūsā Sayrāmī critique ce type de régime. Mais peut-on pour autant le considérer comme un contradicteur du sufisme? Certainement non, parce qu'il lui-même était *murīd* d'un shaykh qui, d'après une anecdote qu'il raconte, est intervenu dans son rêve pour lui faire entendre raison et lui demander de ne pas s'abandonner au *Shāh-nāma*, “histoire des païens misérables”. Il était un contradicteur du sufisme politisé, mais il ne lutta ni contre le régime sufique ni contre celui des Sino-Mandchous rétabli. Il se résignait à tous qui existaient sur le monde ici-bas en tant que réalisations de la volonté divine; et il en est ainsi venu à croire que les révoltés contre le régime des Qing n'étaient ni *ghāzī* ni *shahīd*.

‘Parce que [les officiers sino-mandchous] faisaient le mal qui mérite la punition du sabre, le peuple a été obligé à son tour de le brandir sur la tête des supérieurs. Que Dieu m'en garde. (Mais il y a une certaine raison pour de ne pas regarder les gens qui ont fait les *ghāzāt* comme les *ghāzī* ou les *shahīd*.) Il n'est pas juste dans toutes les religions et les sectes de brandir le sabre et de révolter contre un grand souverain glorieux que Dieu par sa sagesse éternelle a fait grand et à qui Dieu a donné la position de dominateur’.²⁶ ‘Les souverains et les dominateurs de ce monde visible se vantent et se targuent de s'emparer des pays, de les conquérir et de les faire obéir par leurs propres forces et courages. Mais, en réalité, le vrai auteur est Dieu lui-

²⁵ *TAm*s, f.114r-v.

²⁶ *TAm*s, f. 35v-r; Molla Mūsā Sayrāmī, *Tarikhi Hāmīdi*, tr. Änwär Baytur (Beijing 1986) 171-172. Ce dernier est la traduction en uighur moderne du *Ta'rikh-i Hāmīdī* qui est la version révisée du *Ta'rikh-i amniyya*. La phrase entre parenthèse dans la citation ne se trouve que dans ce dernier.

même, que ses actes soient loués, le possesseur du pouvoir, le vivant éternel. Par conséquent, le Dieu suprême, par sa propre sagesse éternelle, a reconnu compétants, soit les souverains qui avaient la foi [islamique], soit ceux qui n'ont pas de religion, pour les rendre maître du peuple. Pour cette raison, il faut prier pour le souverain, le dominateur et les officiers de la région du temps aussi bien que pour leur justice et bonheur. Lorsque le souverain est musulman, il est aussi évident que le soleil que l'on doit prier pour lui. Même si le souverain n'avait pas de religion, il est nécessaire et inévitable de prier pour sa justice et son bonheur, parce que le souverain de cette sorte est aussi la grâce divine. Un distique; il est nécessaire de remercier en toutes circonstances. Qu'elles ne deviennent plus mauvaises!²⁷

Cette idée de Sayrāmī, est-elle la résignation profonde ou bien un simple opportunisme pour accepter la reconquête? Il est certain du moins qu'il n'a pas justifié aucune place au *jihād* que les représentants de la troisième vague ont animé si ardemment.

Le nationalisme moderniste panturquiste a atteint le Turkestan oriental juste avant la première guerre mondiale. Un des personnages représentants de cette aventure, Aḥmed Kemāl, ne précise presque jamais ce qu'il appelle "les ténèbres de l'ignorance dans lesquelles le peuple étouffe".²⁸ Il faut signaler du moins un fait qu'un *shaykh* très influent de l'époque a soutenu les activités d'Aḥmed Kemāl. C'est *shaykh* Maṣṣūr, un qādirī, selon Isa Yusuf Alptekin, qui était le *shaykh* du mausolée renommé de Satuq Boghra Khan, marié avec une sœur des frères Musabayov, à savoir, Yūsuf et Bahā' al-Dīn qui ont patronné Aḥmed Kemāl. Son fils aîné, °Abd al-Qādir a été un des premiers jeunes Kashghariens envoyés à Istanbul et qui a accompagné Aḥmed Kemāl de la capitale de la Turquie jusqu'à Kashghar. Quand ce dernier a inauguré une école, Maṣṣūr y a fait entrer son fils cadet.²⁹ Comme ses quelques homologues de la Turquie et de l'Asie central, le *shaykh*, lui aussi, gardait en ensemble le sufisme et la tendance vers le modernisme.

Quant aux vrais antagonistes du sufisme, c-à-d., les intégrismes islamiques, je n'ai pas d'information sur l'historique de son apparition au Turkestan oriental. D'après l'Annuaire du Xinjiang de 1992, dans la ville de Kashghar seule, il y a plus de 20.000 "wahhābites". Parce qu'ils sont entrés plusieurs fois en conflit avec

²⁷ *TAMS*, ff. 193v-194r.

²⁸ Ici, je me permet d'apporter une correction à mon article 'La transmission du mouvement nationaliste au Turkestan oriental (Xinjiang)', *Central Asian Survey* ix/1, 15, dans lequel j'aurais noté, en me basant sur une interprétation hâtive, qu'il y fut envoyé à la demande des Kashghariens. Mais en réalité, c'est Talāt lui-même qui leur proposa l'envoi d'un instituteur.

²⁹ (Ḥabībẓāde) Aḥmed Kemāl, *Chīn-Türkistān khāṭıraları* 96.

les autres musulmans, le gouvernement de la région autonome est intervenu pour fonder leur propres mosquées. La même publication officielle dit que notamment dans la région méridionale du Xinjiang, il y a des étrangers qui sont entrés illégalement en Chine pour propager leur religion.

En ce qui concerne la quatrième catégorie de l’antagonisme, c-à-d., les conflits entre les *ṭarīqas*, les exemples sont assez nombreux dans l’histoire du Turkestan oriental. Ici, évidemment, il ne s’agit pas de détracteurs du sufisme, mais de la concurrence et la divergence des convictions en matière d’enseignement et de pratiques confrériques. Donc, pour finir je me tournerai vers la première catégorie des opposants: des athées ou des agnostiques.

Dès la “libération” du Xinjiang, le pouvoir politique de la république populaire a été hostile plus ou moins à l’islam en général et au sufisme “populaire” en particulier. Les tribunaux de sharia qui avaient été en fonction notamment pour juger des délits sous le régime ancien ont été définitivement supprimés. Les *waqf* des mosquées, des *madrassa* et des *mazār* entre autres ont été confisqués. Les autorités ont suspecté les activités des sufi et des *būbi* (sufi féminin, exorcisseur-guérisseuse). Quant aux répression durant “la révolution culturelle”, on entend des histoires atroces bien que les gens ne parlent que fragmentairement. Dans le village d’Ay-köl près d’Aqsu, le mausolée de Jamāl al-Dīn, le père du convertisseur de Tughluq Timur Khan a été détruit par les révolutionnaires. D’ailleurs j’ai entendu que pas mal des sufis ont été tués. Mais après la fin de la révolution culturelle, notamment après le deuxième congrès du Parti communiste en 1982, la conjoncture a visiblement changé. Les musulmans uyghurs pensent que “le parti et le gouvernement ont reconnu que les diversités culturelles et la loyauté politique ne sont pas incompatibles”. Les activités du sufisme comme le culte des saints et le *dhikr* ont survécu. Dans les années quatre-vingts et maintenant encore, les intellectuels uyghurs font beaucoup de démarches à la gloire de leur culture et de leur histoire sous le patronnage du pouvoir politique actuel qui est dans la nécessité de se réconcilier avec les minorités. Par exemple, le parti et le gouvernement des communistes officiellement athées, il va de soi, ont fourni des fonds pour construire les mausolées retrouvés des auteurs du *Qutadgu Bilig* et du *Dīwān lughat al-turk* dans la région de Kashghar et de Yarkand. Dans la région d’Ili aussi, on a réparé ou reconstruit plusieurs mausolées. Il est très significatif, semble-t-il, que le pouvoir a choisi les mausolées pour le symbole de la réconciliation. Quand on tient compte de l’existence des intégristes,

il n'est pas improbable que le pouvoir politique de la Chine soutient sincèrement la manifestation de la mentalité religieuse fortement colorée de caractères régionaux qu'est, par exemple, le culte des saints.

Après avoir examiné ce panorama des opposants potentiels au sufisme dans Turkestan oriental, nous arrivons à une conclusion pas très éclatante. Dans cette région, à part les intégristes d'aujourd'hui, il n'existe pas de véritables opposants au sufisme.

SUFISM IN THE CHINESE COURTS: ISLAM AND QING LAW IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

JONATHAN N. LIPMAN

Muslims regularly appeared as plaintiffs and defendants, and sometimes even as judges, in the law courts of China. From the Mongol-dominated Yuan period (1279-1368) on, Muslims constituted an ordinary part of China's social, economic, and political life, residing all over the empire and speaking Chinese as their mother tongue.¹ In the northwest and southwest, far from China's own cultural cores and on the roads to the Muslim world, Sino-Muslims constructed large, discrete communities, with mosques as their centers, easily recognizable in practice (though not in vernacular) as similar to Muslims elsewhere in the world. They also adapted to their Chinese cultural context, becoming Chinese in more than superficial ways.

The Sino-Muslims' relationship with the imperial state, like that with their non-Muslim neighbors, differed widely by region, by class, by community, by individual. Some Muslims became members of China's literary elite, taking the official examinations, serving as government officials, writing poetry in the accepted styles, and serving as mediators between their communities and the state.² Some became Muslim religious professionals, studying Arabic and Persian in orthodox schools, taking the lead in ritual life, traveling to major Muslim centers for further education. Some became soldiers, serving the legitimate ruling dynasty of their day in conquest or sup-

¹ In this essay, I define "China" as a culture area, not a state. When the state is to be indicated, I shall refer to "the Qing empire". "China", in this definition, does not include eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang), Tibet, Mongolia, or the other culturally non-Chinese frontier zones. Indeed, the seventeenth and eighteenth century expansion of the Qing empire far beyond the frontiers of cultural China played an important role in the events described below.

² See Bai Shouyi, et al. (eds.), *Huizu renwu zhi (Ming dai)* (Yinchuan 1988) and *Huizu renwu zhi (Qing dai)* (Yinchuan 1992), biographical dictionaries which contain entries on literati such as Ding Henian, Wang Daiyu, and Liu Zhi, and officials such as Ma Wensheng and Ma Ruwei. In some cases, such as those of the early Ming generals and mid-Ming officials such as Hai Rui, Euro-American scholars question the "Hui" identity of individuals whom Sino-Muslim scholars unambiguously claim.

pression of domestic disturbances, including some caused by Muslims. Others committed crimes, from petty thievery to mass murder and sedition, finding themselves on the wrong side of the law. Whatever paths they chose, Muslims in China could rarely overtly resist the legitimacy and power of the imperial state; when they did, they were branded as “rebels”, and they suffered punishments as severe as the officials could manage to inflict.

The coming of Sufi orders to northwest China³ has been traced by Ma Tong, Joseph Fletcher, Saguchi Tōru, and others to the seventeenth century, when conflicts among Naqshbandis in Altishahr spilled over into Gansu through peripatetic *shaykhs* such as Hidāyat Allāh (Khoja Āfāq) and his father, Muhammad Yūsuf.⁴ The Qing conquest of eastern Turkestan, which they named Xinjiang (New Dominion), in the sixteen-nineties facilitated communication between Muslims already living in China and the entirely Muslim society of Altishahr. Other Sufi paths arrived by other routes, and they all built the *ṭarīqa* as an alternative to the autonomous mosque communities characteristic of China.⁵ This essay will analyze opposition to Sufis and, more significantly, conflict *among* Sufis, as a crucial element in the evolution of northwestern Sino-Muslim society through some of its most violent years, 1747-1896. Evidence will be taken from the records of lawsuits brought by or against Sufis in the

³ “Northwest China” here designates the current provinces of Gansu and Qinghai, and the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. Most of this vast, ethnically diverse area was contained in the pre-1928 province of Gansu, so I shall use “Gansu” as a shorthand name for what the Chinese call “Gan[su]-Ning[xia]-Qing[hai]”. In terms of cultural geography, it constitutes the frontiers of northwestern China, northeast Tibet, southwest Mongolia, and the eastern edge of Turkic Central Asia.

⁴ Joseph Fletcher, “Les ‘voies’ (*turuq*) soufies en Chine”, in A. Popovic and G. Veinstein (eds.), *Les ordres mystiques dan l'Islam* (Paris 1986) 13-26; id., “The Naqshbandiyya in northwest China”, in Beatrice Manz (ed.), *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia* (London 1995), sep. pag.; Ma Tong, *Zhongguo Yisilan jiaopai menhuan suyuan* (Yinchuan 1986); Ma Tong, *Zhongguo Yisilan jiaopai yu menhuan zhidu shilue* (Yinchuan 1983); Saguchi Tōru, “Chūgoku Isuramu no shinpishugi”, *Tōhōgaku* ix (1954) 75-92. Though there has been controversy over whether the northwestern Muslims were influenced primarily by Sufism or by other Muslim currents (such as Shiism or Ismā‘īlism), Japanese scholars carefully sifted the evidence and concluded, as early as the nineteen-forties, that many of the Gansu Muslims had become Sufis by the mid-Qing. See, for example, Ono Shinobu, “Chūgoku ni okeru Kaikyō kyōdan”, *Tōa ronshu* vi (1948) 78-88.

⁵ Called Gedimu in Chinese, from Arabic *qadīm*, this conventional Muslim socioreligious form had dominated Sino-Muslim life until this point. See Feng Zenglie, “Gedimu’ bayi”, in Gansu sheng minzu yanjiusuo (eds.), *Xibei Yisilanjiao yanjiu* (Lanzhou 1985) 130-141.

Qing (1644-1912) dynasty's courts, a rich body of historical materials for understanding the grounds of contention within Muslim communities.

We will be concerned here not with *taṣawwuf* but rather with *ṭarīqa*, not with theological debates between mystics and non-mystics but rather with hotly-contested rivalries between Sufis. Often couched in terms of orthopraxy, textual purity, and ritual rectitude, these divisions also reveal a complex social milieu in which mosque construction, personal loyalties, access to material and human resources, and ethnocultural stereotyping played powerful roles. This project can contribute to our knowledge of the contexts and modes of contestations concerning Islamic mysticism by articulating the sociopolitical configuration of these communities and the role that conflict among Sufi orders played in the transformations of society. There is no doubt that Sufism and Sufi orders radically altered most northwestern Sino-Muslim communities, and that their changes affected the larger non-Muslim society around them. Since those processes often involved confrontation and violence, lawsuits allow us access to the Muslims' perceptions and those of the central Qing state and its local officials.

Political legitimacy and the power to define antisocial behavior constitute an important ground of controversy for the Sufis of Gansu. Why would Sufis call upon secular Qing law to settle conflicts, often overtly religious in nature, with other Sufis? What new possibilities for loyalty and identification did the *ṭarīqa* provide for these Sino-Muslims? How did the sociocultural environment of northwest China affect the growth of Sufi orders? The present essay will attempt answers to these questions, using law cases from Gansu as primary evidence.

In the local gazetteer of Xunhua, a small town on the south bank of the upper Yellow River, we find recorded a conflict between two groups of Muslims, whom the Chinese texts call Fore-Breakers (*qiankai*) and After-Breakers (*houkai*), referring to whether they advocated breaking the Ramadan fast before or after prayers:

'In 1748, the After-Breaker Ma Yinghuan went to Beijing to accuse Ma Laichi of teaching heterodoxy in order to delude the people. Former Gansu Governor Huang Tinggui investigated the matter and found that Ma Yinghuan should be punished for 'false accusation' [with the penalty Ma Laichi would have received had he been found guilty].⁶ Following the precedents

⁶ The rule by which a plaintiff may receive the penalty which the defendant would have

on conflict prevention, [Huang sentenced Ma Yinghuan to] military servitude. He further instructed that when Fore-Breakers and After-Breakers conduct funerals, their religious leaders should not invite both litigants [together] to recite scripture. He ordered in the case file that incidents of disruption must cease. Ma Laichi and his son, Ma Guobao, thereafter traveled to and fro spreading their teaching'.⁷

Though no overtly Sufi content appears in this text, we know that Ma Laichi was a Naqshbandī. He had been initiated by a disciple of Hidāyat Allāh (Khoja Āfāq), studied in the Muslim heartlands, brought a new set of Muslim texts back to Gansu and advocated an unfamiliar form of social and religious organization, the *ṭarīqa*.⁸ One of his most divisive innovations lay in abbreviating the lengthy scriptural recitation customary at life cycle celebrations by reading a volume of extracts rather than the Koranic text itself. Reciting this shorter text, the *Mingshale*,⁹ saved time and money for ordinary Muslims, who paid the religious professionals to read for them. *Ahong*¹⁰ who did not follow Ma Laichi's teaching were thus deprived of some part of their income, which went to the new group.¹¹ Ma Yinghuan also claimed that Ma Laichi had founded *Mingshahui* ("Bright Sand Societies"), at whose meetings initiates had sand blown into their ears.¹² His intention clearly lay in associating Ma Laichi's Sufis with Daoist or Buddhist groups, always suspect in China for their bizarre ritual practices and propensity for sedition. Ended by Governor Huang's summary judgment, Ma Yinghuan's

received if guilty is called *fanzuo*. Its makers intended it as an incentive against false accusation and spurious litigation.

⁷ *Xunhua zhi, juan* 8, cited in Qinghai minzu xueyuan minzu yanjiusuo (eds.), *Salazu shiliao jilu* (Xining 1981) 91-92.

⁸ Ma Tong, *Shilue* 223-224.

⁹ Fletcher, 'Naqshbandiyya' 17-18, analyzes the title of this text, speculating that it might be a commentary on a selection of prophetic writings such as Ibn al-ʿArabi's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*.

¹⁰ Sino-Muslims customarily use the term *ahong* (from Persian *ākhund*) to denote an ordinary religious professional or teacher.

¹¹ Mu Shouqi, an important Chinese chronicler of the northwest does not hesitate to call the motivations of the litigants entirely economic, though he does also mention the pleasure which Gansu Muslims took in the innovative practices associated with Ma Laichi's *ṭarīqa*: 'The newness [fell on their] eyes and ears, and in a moment, with one accord, they all followed it'. See his *Gan Ning Qing shilue* (Taibei 1970) 18.37b-38a. This compendium of primary sources will hereafter be referred to as *GNQSL*.

¹² Nakada Yoshinobu, *Kaikai minzoku no shomondai* (Tokyo 1971) 88. This "Bright Sand" business, quite common in Chinese accounts, derives from the Chinese characters used in the name of Ma Laichi's Arabic text, the *Mingshale*. Some versions of this title use the characters for "bright sand" (*ming sha*), while others use a different *ming* to indicate the sinister "dark sand."

suit failed to prevent Ma Laichi and his son from initiating many northwestern Muslims into their *ṭarīqa*.

The Sufi content of Ma Laichi's teaching was certainly crucial to the lawsuit, creating the innovations to which Ma Yinghuan objected so strongly. But we must also look at the legal grounds on which Ma Yinghuan brought suit, for the Qing officials' understanding of this conflict determined its legal result, and their comprehension surely differed from that of the litigants. Elsewhere in the Muslim world, where secular authority could also be Muslim authority, the state's jurisdiction would not be nearly so problematic. Groups in conflict might also request a judgment from a famous scholar rather than resort to the court. But in Gansu, neither faction in a dispute would recognize the authorities cited by the other, and the state, being non-Muslim, would not act on the same grounds as Muslim legal institutions. Therefore, Ma Yinghuan's suit, explicitly recognizing the legitimacy of the Qing legal system to resolve disputes *within* northwestern Muslim society, demonstrates the degree to which the Muslims of the northwest belonged in China. The suit between *qiankai* and *houkai* set a precedent in which religious conflicts between Muslims could be submitted for judgment to the secular authorities.

It also established some of the *Chinese* legal grounds for controversy. Ma Yinghuan accused Ma Laichi of *xiejiao huozhong*, teaching heterodoxy to delude the people, a very serious crime.¹³ Based on the Chinese state's experience with Buddhist and Daoist groups perceived as potentially subversive, it concentrates on activities associated specifically with them, some of which also point directly at Sufis as well. For example, the statute forbade meetings which take place at night, which Muslims must of course do during Ramaḍān and Sufis often did as part of their *dhikr* practice. The supplementary statutes (*li*) forbade writing charms, preparing sacred writings (especially esoteric, encoded texts), and collecting contributions, among many other things. Ironically, these statutes, invoked against Sufis in the eighteenth century, specified banishment to Xinjiang and enslavement to the *begs* (who were Sufis) or to other Muslims as fit punishment for the practice of *xiejiao*.

Though Governor Huang found against Ma Yinghuan and ordered

¹³ The statute regarding *xiejiao*, heretical teachings, may be found in translation and the Chinese original in J.J.M. de Groot, *Sectarianism and religious persecution in China* (Amsterdam 1903-4) i, 137-147, with the main statute (*li*) at pp. 137-138.

him punished, a Qing court might well have found merit in the argument that Sufis practice heterodoxy. In a legal culture which valued conservatism and harmony, Ma Laichi's group might have appeared innovative and divisive. Its Sufi practices, however calmly these Naqshbandīs may have undertaken them, were certainly unlike those of Gedimu communities, since the *ṭarīqa* created new, specific, personal bonds of religious loyalty and communication between communities where only coreligionary ties had existed before. If Ma Yinghuan had been able to prove his allegations of sand-blowing or other bizarre practices, he might have been more successful, given the Qing's anxiety about and the *ṭarīqa*'s social resemblance to Buddhist and Daoist sectarianism. Fortunately for Ma Laichi and his Sufi solidarity, the label of "New Teaching", a pejorative and long-lasting name, did not stick to them as a result of this lawsuit.

In terms of Sino-Muslim history, the suit's precedent and importance lay rather in Ma Yinghuan's behavior — suing fellow Muslims in the secular courts for religious "crimes". Altishahr, the nearest site of famous Muslim teachers and schools, lay a thousand dangerous miles away across a geographic, linguistic and cultural divide, so it would have been very difficult for the two sides to agree on a distant Muslim religious authority to whom they might appeal. In addition, the Qing government had restricted travel to and from Xinjiang, because invasions and insurrections, most of them led by Sufis, had disturbed the region for decades. The conflicts created by the entry of Sufism into the northwest thus could only be solved by the Muslims themselves, and resolution techniques such as intimidation or mediation clearly had not worked by 1748. Ma Yinghuan therefore appealed to the Qing state courts, first at the provincial and then at the national level, as an appropriate venue to block the spread of Ma Laichi's Sufi order. Governor Huang's verdict vindicated Ma Laichi, who thereby won the adherence of Han Hajji, the hereditary leader of the Turkic-speaking Muslims around Xunhua, a people called Salars (Chinese *Sala* or *Salaer*). Han's initiation set the stage for the next round of conflict over Sufism in Gansu.

Ma Laichi had been initiated into the *Āfāqiyya*, a Naqshbandī sub-order, and possibly the *Qādiriyya* and *Suhrawardiyya* as well.¹⁴ The *Āfāqī* tradition included political activism and an alliance with the

¹⁴ Ma Tong, *Shilue* 225-226.

state, even a non-Muslim state;¹⁵ the conventional silent *dhikr* characteristic of Naqshbandīs all over the world;¹⁶ and, perhaps most significantly, hereditary succession to the charisma of the shaykh.¹⁷ In the cultural context of northwestern China, this last characteristic proved crucial. The difference between Ma Laichi's *ṭarīqa* and conventional Sino-Muslim mosques lay in the authority which the shaykh could exercise over a number of disparate communities, whereas Gedimu *ahong* had to be hired by the elders of a single mosque-centered local community. If the shaykh's authority could be inherited and established within a family line, the extraordinary structures and power of the Chinese corporate lineage (Chinese *jiazu*), well known to northwestern Muslims (who were, after all, culturally Chinese), could be used to its advantage. This is precisely what happened — Ma Laichi's *ṭarīqa*, called Khafiyya after its silent *dhikr*, became the first saintly lineage (Chinese *menhuan*) of Gansu.

Conflict might have continued between Ma Laichi and non-Sufis like the exiled Ma Yinghuan, but a new player arrived on the scene less than fifteen years after the initial lawsuit. A Sino-Muslim pilgrim named Ma Mingxin, who had studied in Yemen and Mecca for twenty years, brought another Sufi order to Gansu in 1761. Inspired by the currents of jadidist revivalism he had encountered in the Muslim world, this new leader advocated *ṭarīqa* and sharia, opposing the Khafiyya for both its hereditary succession and its corporate enrichment through donations. Because his teachers in Yemen had experimented with the vocal *dhikr*, unusual for Naqshbandīs but common in Yemen during that period, and with physical movement during its recitation, Ma Mingxin's ritual innovations also separated him and his solidarity from the other Muslims of Gansu, both Khafiyya and Gedimu.

The story of Ma Mingxin's establishment of his *ṭarīqa*, called Jahriyya for its vocal *dhikr*, is well known and documented in the literature.¹⁸ Though Ma Laichi's son Ma Guobao and his initiate Han

¹⁵ Khoja Āfāq had himself served as secular governor of Kashgaria under the imprimatur of Galdan, the non-Muslim hegemon of the Zunghars.

¹⁶ Hamid Algar, 'Silent and vocal *dhikr* in the Naqshbandi order', in Albrecht Dietrich (ed.), *Akten des VII. Kongresses für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft* (Göttingen 1976) 39-46.

¹⁷ Joseph Fletcher, 'Ch'ing Inner Asia c. 1800', in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Cambridge history of China* (Cambridge 1978) x/1 74, reviews briefly the history of the Makhdūmzāda khojas of Turkestan, spiritual and institutional ancestors of Ma Laichi's Khafiyya, whose Sufi orders advocated hereditary succession to the shaykh's *baraka*.

¹⁸ Francoise Aubin, 'En Islam Chinois: Quel Naqshbandis?', in M. Gaborieau, A. Popovic, & T. Zarcone (eds.), *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et situation actuelle d'un ordre*

Hajji resisted within the Salar communities, the new group grew rapidly. Conflict arose almost immediately, for Ma Mingxin's disciples, including one Hemaluhu, preached in public, and several lawsuits were brought in 1761 over three new mosques which the Jahriyya built in Xunhua:

'Han Hajji sued before the subprefect at Xunhua, requesting an order to return to a single mosque. Hemaluhu countersued before the provincial judge, [claiming that] Han Hajji had conspired with Ma Guobao to collect money, delude the people, and entice people to join their teaching. Han Hajji testified that the New Teaching leader Ma Mingxin had teamed up with Yang Huizi to enter Salar country. With Hemaluhu, Ma Suonan, and Han Hashao, [Ma Mingxin] had spread wild talk and [auguries of] fortune and misfortune, inciting and deceiving the ignorant people. The local officials clarified the matter by inquiries and expelled Ma Mingxin far from Salar country. Hemaluhu then drew the pattern [of a mosque] on the ground outside the Zhangha [Khafiyya] mosque, made wild speeches, manifested divine power, waved his head back and forth, and recited scriptures while dancing. In accordance with the petition drawn up at the provincial judge's yamen, [the officials] thereafter investigated and clarified the false charges according to precedent on 'plotting a crime,' discussing the matter completely. The said prisoners' teachings have differences and similarities. It was ordered that the twelve communities of Salars each select one man as religious supervisor [*zhangjiao*]. The three new mosques should be separated for worship in order to prevent conflict'.¹⁹

Again, we find Muslims, this time Khafiyya Sufis, claiming that the activities of other Muslims, Jahriyya Sufis, fell within the secular criminal categories of heterodoxy and deluding the people with superstition. Han Hajji and Ma Guobao used the term "New Teaching" to refer to Ma Mingxin's *ṭarīqa*, and the name stuck, branding the Jahriyya for over a century as innovative and therefore as a disrupter of social order.²⁰ The Jahriyya's opponents claimed that the resemblance between Jahriyya Sufi practice (dancing, ecstatic prayer) and Buddhist-Daoist sectarianism constituted evidence of the "New Teaching's" subversive, anti-social character.

Though Ma Mingxin did indeed leave Salar country, the conflict was temporarily transferred to Hezhou, a major Muslim center east of Xunhua, where his initiation of an *ahong* named Qi led to street brawling and accusations at court. After Qi Ahong and Ma Mingxin had both been beaten at the magistrate's order, Qi returned to his

mystique musulman (Istanbul-Paris 1990) 491-572; Ma Tong's two books, cited above; and Yang Huaizhong, 'Lun shiba shiji Zhehelinye Musilin de qiyi', in Yang Huaizhong, *Huizu shi lungao* (Yinchuan 1991) 310-370.

¹⁹ GNQSL 18.42a.

²⁰ Late in the nineteenth century the term would be applied to several innovative Muslim groups, and the Jahriyya joined the diverse melange of established solidarities lumped together as "Old Teaching".

rivals' neighborhood and cursed them.²¹ Meanwhile, Ma Mingxin's disciples continued to initiate new members among the Salars, and 1769 saw a resumption of the contest between Sufis in the Xunhua court:

'Han Hajji sued Hemaluhu for not following Islamic law, and the former magistrate Zhang Qunfang ordered that the three new mosques be closed, to be allowed to open only when the two sides could get along. He also punished Hemaluhu with the cangue. Hemaluhu was not satisfied and brought an accusation of heterodoxy against Han Hajji before the provincial judge. Then Hajji's younger brother Han Wu accused Hemaluhu of heterodox teachings. The case was presented before the Lanzhou city, Hezhou prefecture, and Xunhua subprefecture courts for interrogation regarding the details. The provincial judge passed the case to the Governor-General, who memorialized that all the litigants had brought false charges and should be punished according to *fanzuo*. Hemaluhu started it all, so he was exiled to Urumqi to be given to the soldiers as a slave. Han Wu was exiled to a distance of 3,000 *li*. The interrogation concluded that if the two teachings do not want to unite, there is no need to force them [to do so]. Each should choose a religious supervisor to restrain them. Investigating the matter of the three new mosques, [he determined that] they should still be separated for worship. As for Ma Mingxin and Ma Guobao, they were not investigated'.²²

These cases from the seventeen-sixties illustrate the reception of Sufism in Gansu, both by Muslims and by the officials, and the relationship of Sino-Muslims to the Qing state. Both sides went to the Qing court to demonstrate that their rivals violated Islamic law, using the "heterodoxy" accusation as a weapon, but the officials refused to validate the charge. Though the Muslims may have believed that their rivals practiced *Islamic* heterodoxy, the court records indicate that they were fully aware of the Buddhist-Daoist targets of the *Qing* heterodoxy statutes. Hemaluhu accused Ma Guobao's Khafiyya of collecting excessive contributions, a charge often laid against Sufis in a Muslim setting but also susceptible to the interpretation of planning a subversive movement or cheating the common folks, the wards of the Qing state. Han Hajji, in return, described Hemaluhu's Sufi worship — text recitation while dancing, manifesting divine power (*karāmāt*), etc. — in language often used to accuse sectarians of bizarre religious rituals designed to fleece the non-Muslim Chinese.

We must also note the importance of Ma Mingxin's forced exile from Salar country. The Turkic-speaking Salars lay at the center of

²¹ Yang Huaizhong, 'Lun shiba shiji' 320-321, citing an Arabic chronicle written by generations of Jahriyya Sufis and translated by Ma Xuezhi as *Zhehelinye daotong shi*. Qi Ahong's account is given in the first person within this source.

²² *Xunhua zhi*, juan 8, cited in *Salazu shiliao jilu* (Xining 1981) 92; and GNQSL 18.38a.

much conflict during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the court saw Ma's divisive presence among them as particularly threatening to peace.²³ Perceived as less acculturated to Chinese ways than Chinese-speaking Muslims, and thus less civilized, the Salars were generally classed by the Qing court as a sub-group of Tibetans (*Fan*), which by language and culture they were not. Because of their distance from the tempering influence of Chinese culture, the Salars bore the pejorative Chinese labels of congenital bandits, violent and ferocious, gathering weapons at a moment's notice, not fearing death but loving a good feud. Qing officials and Gansu non-Muslims alike feared that violence from Salar territory would spill over into the densely populated central and eastern Gansu regions, so the state took particular precautions to isolate the Salars from any radical teachings which might lead them to bellicose behavior. In this, they surely failed.

The next court case involving these contentious Sufis was brought in 1773, the first to involve murder. Hemaluhu having been exiled to Xinjiang and Ma Mingxin to Anding, in eastern Gansu, the Jahriyya leadership in Salar country passed to Su Sishisan (Su Forty-three) and Han Erge (Han Second), the latter a wealthy merchant from Qingshui, one of the twelve Salar communities. Qingshui was divided by a small river into east and west sections, loyal to the Khafiyya (Old Teaching) and Jahriyya (New Teaching) Sufi orders respectively.

'In the ninth [lunar] month of 1773, the New Teaching enticed [the Muslims of Qingshui] East Village to become its adherents, and those who ran to follow it numbered twenty families, including Han Geya. The Old Teaching went to the subprefecture to lodge a complaint, met New Teaching adherents on the road and killed one of them. Magistrate Zhang Qunfang concluded that punishment would be necessary, but the case was still not concluded when, in the eleventh month, Han Erge led his gang to East Village and killed four Old Teaching adherents. According to precedents for non-Chinese (*fan*), he was sentenced to wear the cangue, and that ended the case. From that time on, the conflict never abated, but when the local officials sent junior officers and yamen runners to suppress it, [the Muslims] still knew fear of the law and withdrew'.²⁴

The two Sufi orders had been confronting one another for over a decade, most vociferously in Salar country, and the initiation of twenty families in Qingshui constituted an important victory for the

²³ Mi Yizhi, *Salazu zhengzhi shehui shi* (Hong Kong 1990) Chapter v, discusses the growth of a "spirit of anti-Qing rebellion" among the Salars.

²⁴ *Xunhua zhi*, juan 8, cited in *Salazu shiliao jilu* 93.

New Teaching. The Old Teaching leaders, Han Hajji's comrades, once again prepared to attack their religious rivals in the Qing court, but instead of another suit they created a violent incident. We do not know what transpired on that isolated road near Xunhua, but we must try to deduce the motivations which animated these Muslims to kill one another, for ten years later the feuding resulted in state intervention and a local war that cost thousands of lives.

After 1773, New and Old Teaching adherents among the Salars escalated their mutual violence, in revenge for earlier insults and outrages and in continuing conflict over the leaders, messages and rituals of their Sufi orders. Murder, arson, and brawling came to be considered ordinary. In 1780, adherents of both groups attended a funeral in Dasugu village and came to blows; a wounded New Teaching member died a few days later. The magistrate, Hong Bin, did not punish the assailant sufficiently to satisfy the aggrieved Jahriyya. So the New Teaching leaders Su Sishisan and Han Erge planned revenge and organized their followers for a large scale attack on Old Teaching villages, which they undertook early in 1781. The sanguinary results brought the matter to the attention of provincial-level authorities. The Lanzhou commander Lerchin sent military officials to the spot to investigate. Su Sishisan met these officers, who were commanded by Xinzhu, and their small contingent of troops, but dissembled and claimed to be *Old Teaching*. Following earlier legal precedents and the bias of Qing officials against innovation, Xinzhu bragged that they had come to exterminate the New Teaching, the divisive threat to social order.

In the face of this threat to their Jahriyya solidarity, Su Sishisan and his followers killed both officials and their guards, irrevocably placing themselves in violent opposition to the military might of the Qing state. It is not clear, however, that they *intended* that result, for they immediately moved not against other government troops or garrisons but against their Old Teaching rivals at Hezhou. The Qing officials, however, investigated the matter immediately, considered it a "rebellion",²⁵ and arrested Ma Mingxin as the ringleader, though

²⁵ Given their behavior to this point, Su Sishisan and Han Erge probably did not intend to confront the armed might of the Qing state in a political insurrection. Rather, they faced a minor Qing official who, duped into believing them Old Teaching adherents, told them he intended to exterminate their *ṭarīqa*. Killing an official made them rebels in the eyes of the law, and neither Qing nor contemporary Sino-Muslim historians hesitate in calling their behavior an uprising, though they evaluate its moral quality quite differently. State intervention

he was living far from Salar country at the time. Hearing that their shaykh was imprisoned in the provincial capital, Lanzhou, the armed Jahriyya Sufis, two thousand strong, moved rapidly to besiege that city and rescue their leader. Failing that, in the face of Lanzhou's stout walls, Ma Mingxin's summary execution by provincial officials, and their own inexperience in siege warfare, Su Sishisan and his remaining Muslim irregulars entrenched themselves on a nearby mountain, resisted a large concentration of government troops for several months, and died to the last man in a climactic battle.²⁶

One New Teaching adherent, captured by government troops in 1781, in a lengthy confession explained the roots of conflict as both secular and religious but not seditious. He blamed the "established" Khafiyya, to which the Qing-appointed authorities among the Muslims belonged:

'Ma Mingxin became head of the New Teaching in 1770, Su Sishisan was his disciple, and I became Ma Mingxin's disciple in 1771....at first, the Salars were governed by the Xunhua *tusi*,²⁷ who was Old Teaching. Su Ahong was New Teaching, and the two could not coexist. So the New Teaching's Su Ahong and Han Erge did not obey him, and they fought against the *tusi*'.²⁸

Since the *tusi*, who bore the Qing's patent of office to rule the Salars, was a Khafiyya adherent, that automatically put the rival Jahriyya in legal jeopardy in case of conflict.

In addition to secular conflict, the confession did not ignore religious difference:

'The origins of the two [groups'] scriptures are identical, not different at all; only the way of reciting differs. The Old Teaching recites in a low voice, the New loudly, waving the head and dancing. After 1771 Ma Mingxin met with *ahong* from all over to transmit the scripture, but the Old Teaching *ahong* from Hezhou, Ma Laichi, said it was heterodox teaching and refused to follow it, so mutual killings often resulted'.²⁹

This statement, probably made under torture, encapsulates a crucial problem in understanding these conflicts: Why did differences in *dhikr* recitation, even including such divisive forms as

in what were essentially local conflicts must be seen as a major cause of large-scale violence by and against Muslims in Gansu after 1781. Since Muslims invariably fought on both sides in such incidents, they cannot be called "Muslim rebellions" without careful qualification.

²⁶ The documents of the Qing officials, civilian and military, describing this military campaign in detail may be found in *Qinding Lanzhou jilue* (Yinchuan, reprint 1988).

²⁷ For the workings of the *tusi* system, which gave Qing patents of office and emoluments to local hereditary leaders in exchange for their loyalty, see Mi Yizhi, *Salazu* 55-70.

²⁸ *Salazu dang'an shiliao* (Xining 1981) 104-105.

²⁹ *Qinding Lanzhou jilue* 99.

music and dancing, cause bloody rifts between Sufis in northwest China when they often did not in other parts of the Muslim world? A full answer to this question lies beyond the scope of this essay, but several useful points arise from these lawsuits. First, the initial conflict over *dhikr* took place largely among the Salars, a frontier people accustomed to martial practice and armed against surrounding peoples, who sometimes turned hostile. Second, the rivalry between Sufi orders rapidly eclipsed any disputes which might have existed between Sufis and non-Sufis, to the extent that both non-Sufi Gedimu and the Khafiyya Sufis came to be conjoined under the Chinese name “Old Teaching”, in contrast to Ma Mingxin’s Jahriyya, which from this point until the late nineteenth century bore the “New Teaching” label. And third, Sufism *did* play a role in creating and sustaining the conflicts between these groups, especially disagreements over the *dhikr*, the ecstatic rituals characteristic of the Jahriyya, and the hereditary succession of Ma Guobao to his father’s place as Khafiyya shaykh. Secular motivations such as mosque-building, loyalty to rival leaders, and vengeance for earlier wrongs also motivated these Sufis to violence.

The Qing’s brutal and thorough suppression of Su Sishisan’s “rebellion” was followed by a second Jahriyya “rebellion”, less spontaneous than the first, led by a Chinese-speaking *ahong* who openly sought revenge for Ma Mingxin’s death. Suppressed like Su Sishisan’s, this local war also cost the Qing several months of military action and a great deal of money, while deepening the conviction that the New Teaching, the Jahriyya Sufi order, lay at the root of Gansu’s problems. Though many Qing officials were sophisticated enough to analyze the conflict in social or political terms — a major corruption case had bled the province’s revenues, and a number of provincial-level officials had been indicted for embezzlement and sheer incompetence — religious and ethnocultural explanations dominate the contemporary sources. Muslims came to be viewed as inherently violent, unruly people, and all Islamic institutions, not just the Jahriyya, came under renewed state scrutiny. All mosque-building was forbidden, and all Muslim communities were enjoined to report to the officials the presence of wandering preachers, which surely pointed to Sufis, since Gedimu *ahong* stayed at the mosques which employed them. The Qing authorities could not easily distinguish among various Muslim groups, and at one point erroneously arrested and exiled Ma Wuyi, Ma Laichi’s grandson and a

bastion of the Old Teaching Khafiyya, as a New Teaching rebel.³⁰

Since the Qing sought to suppress the New Teaching entirely,³¹ Gansu society, especially Salar country, became increasingly susceptible to disturbance by disputes based on religious solidarity. A lawsuit of 1811-1812 illustrates the difficulty of governing and judging, either by legal precedent or by practical considerations, in such a volatile environment. Nayancheng, the memorialist, was the Governor-General of Shaanxi and Gansu:³²

'Around Xining Muslims and Tibetans live intermixed. Among the Muslims the Salars are exceptionally vicious and violent, uncontrollable by legal means, as Your Majesty has long been aware...A Salar of Gandutang in Bayanrong, Ma Xiangfu, was excessively evil by nature and loved bringing lawsuits. In the 8th [lunar] month of 1811, another Gandutang Muslim, Ma Laoer, told Ma Xiangfu that a Muslim of Datong county, Ma Dehai, was at home recovering from an illness. Ma Xiangfu suspected that Ma Dehai was a New Teaching [Sufi] engaged in [long-term] meditative practice. Ma Laoer encouraged him to report to the officials, so [Ma Xiangfu] went to the provincial judge and lodged an accusation. Ma Xiangfu publicly stated that Ma Laoer had given slanderous evidence that the New Teaching would bully and wipe out the Old Teaching. [Ma Xiangfu's] son Ma Liushisan wrote [about the suit] to a Gandutang Muslim, La Shaer, telling him to go to Ma Laoer's house and browbeat him...La Shaer obeyed, and went with Qimu and forty or fifty others to pick a fight at Ma Laoer's place. They hurt no one, but they stole livestock, and the trouble could not be quelled... If I decide against the New Teaching, then they will be disturbed...but if I hold that Ma Xiangfu had lodged a wrongful accusation, then [people] will claim that the officials are siding with the New Teaching, and the Old Teaching adherents will become suspicious. The balance of severity and lenience must be considered with great care... On investigation, the provincial judge discovered that Ma Dehai, Ma Laoer, and Ma Xiangfu were all members of the Old Teaching, [so this was] not a case involving the New Teaching but just Ma Xiangfu personally stirring up trouble. He was sentenced to wear the cangue for three months, beaten, and the case disposed of...and the livestock returned to their owners. I also reiterated the former Emperor's edict in every village, that Old and New should not be distinguished, that New Teaching [adherents] who behave as good

³⁰ Kataoka Kazutada, "Seichō no Kaimin seisaku" no zai kento', *Rekishi kenkyū* xiii (1976) 71-72.

³¹ Fukang'an, a high military official engaged in putting down the "rebels", argued that this was not possible, but he was overruled. The New Teaching was not the only target of Qing repression in this region. In 1777 a non-Muslim, Huang Guoqi, preached heterodox scriptures in Hezhou, gathered crowds and established secret signs. Concluding that this was the same threat to social order as Wang Lun's uprising in Shandong in 1774, the Governor-General had him arrested and executed. He did comment in his memorial that had the trouble taken place among the Muslims, it would have required troops to settle. GNQSL 18.46b.

³² A grandson of Agui, who had suppressed Su Sishisan (1781) and the subsequent New Teaching violence (1784), Nayancheng sought to complete his illustrious ancestor's work of building a lasting peace in Gansu.

subjects should not be liable to prosecution... Even after the case was closed, that criminal [Ma Xiangfu] wandered about seeking alms and contributions... He threatened a Kargang Muslim, Ye Sishiwu, saying that if he didn't pay protection money, [Ma] would report him to the officials as a New Teaching adherent. Ye feared even a false accusation, and paid him 21,000 cash, then went to court with a complaint... I [Nayancheng] wanted to seek the truth in this case...so I personally examined the evidence, and Ma Xiangfu admitted his criminal acts. I stringently increased his sentence, admonishing him not to set up heterodox teachings, stir up the mob to violence, etc. The case was closed without concealment or whitewash'.³³

Here we have no religious rivalry but rather an unscrupulous Muslim shaking down his coreligionaries by threatening to expose them, falsely, of membership in the proscribed New Teaching. Nayancheng memorialized further that the New vs. Old Teaching controversy, the sorrow of the northwest, consisted of rivalries among leaders for local power. He concluded that the troubles were not religious in nature, but that the disorder followed from reckless behavior like that of Ma Xiangfu and La Shaer. On the surface, he was correct, but he underestimated the power of rivalry between Sufi orders to disrupt local society.

For the next forty years, Salars and other Muslims paraded through the Qing courts, charged not with sedition or "New Teaching" but with rather more conventional crimes. The Qing Board of Punishments, convinced by its own local officials that Muslims represented by their very presence a threat to social order, gradually created a body of statutes directed specifically at Muslim offenders, punishing them more harshly than non-Muslims who committed the same offenses. In a Daoguang period ordinance, the Board equated Muslims with the most violent, uncontrollable bandits within Chinese society and recommended severe penalties for either group when they violated the law.³⁴ Though this legislative trend had nothing overtly to do with Sufism, it stood in part as a reaction to the violence among Sufis in Gansu. It also set the stage for consistently discriminatory judgments by local officials against Muslims, whether Sufis or not, a development which had dire consequences the next time that law-suits between Sufis became general in the northwest. Prejudiced local officials often memorialized requesting local or empire-wide bans on Islam, but the Emperors maintained their policy of "equal benevolence toward all subjects", an ideological position which rang

³³ *Salazu dang'an shiliao* 174-175.

³⁴ Kataoka Kazutada, 'Keian shiryō yori mitaru Seichō no Kaimin seisaku', *Shigaku kenkyū* cxxxvi (June 1977) 23.

increasingly hollow.³⁵

By the late eighteen-fifties the Qing empire could no longer maintain control over much of its territory. The Taiping rebels in south and central China, Du Wenxiu's Muslim-led Pingnan state in the southwest, Nian rebel bands in the heart of the North China plain, all had eaten away at imperial domination and revenues by defeating Qing armies and establishing hegemony over large areas. Muslim religious disputes also continued. In 1858, a fresh round of lawsuits and potential violence broke out at Dan'ger, a town west of Xining on the very edge of Tibet, between a Khafiyya subgroup called Mufti, originally from Didao prefecture east of Hezhou, and Salars from Xunhua and Bayan who belonged to Ma Laichi's branch of the Khafiyya, a saintly lineage called the Huasi menhuan.

Both mosques in Dan'ger belonged to the Didao group, who resented an influx of Salars crowding in to worship, presumably demanding that their own rituals be followed, so the Didao Muslims decided to exclude the newcomers. The Salars brought suit at the prefectural level, and the officials were investigating the charges when Yang Huantai, a Muslim from Bayan, suggested that the Didao Muslims, who were rich, contribute cash to help the Salars build a new mosque. Ma Gasan, later to become a famous anti-Qing activist, remembered that new mosque construction had been forbidden back in the seventeen-eighties and grew suspicious that the Didao Muslims could file a suit once the project began. He requested permission of the Bayan prefect to go to Dan'ger to dispute the case with the Didao Muslims, but that official allowed only a few old men to go, not the large crowd which had gathered. The case was finally decided by giving the smaller of the two Didao mosques, outside Dan'ger town, to the Salars and Hezhou Muslims.³⁶

Time was running out for the legal processes to work as well as they did in the Dan'ger case. As local and regional rebellions flourished, Taiping armies moved northward from the central Yangzi region and Sichuan, and the Qing looked to be a lost cause, Muslims all over Salar country and the Xining region took the opportunity to

³⁵ *Salazu dang'an shiliao* 182-188, records a case in which Qishan, a Manchu official in Gansu, mounted a successful military operation against a Salar "bandit gang" and exterminated them but was cashiered by the throne for overextending his authority and wantonly killing innocent Muslims. Clearly there were limits to official discrimination, but the trend was nonetheless clear to both officials and Muslims — Muslims would be more severely punished than non-Muslims for the same crimes.

³⁶ *Salazu dang'an shiliao* 195-196.

settle local scores, many with other Muslims. The officials blamed the Salars, but other Muslims were also clearly implicated. In 1861 a Mufti *ahong*, Ye Chengzu, began to preach and initiate adherents in the Xining region, and Ma Guiyuan, the local Salar leader, wanted to debate him. The conflict escalated, lawsuits were brought, and villages were attacked. The prefect gathered a large army to pacify the district, and the Salars fled. When the army pursued them, killing hundreds in a series of battles in the mountains, non-Muslim militias around Xining descended upon Muslim villages and slaughtered their residents. The Salars responded by debouching from the mountains onto the fertile valleys south of Xining and pillaging non-Muslim villages. Far from being “religious feuds” or “ethnic wars”, these confusing conflicts around Xining set neighbor against neighbor, Muslim against Muslim, militia against militia. The army rushed to and fro but could not completely eradicate the conflicts, which grew larger as desire for revenge joined other motivations to violence.³⁷ From 1861 on, Gansu’s various Muslim communities had to take sides in the vast array of conflicts usually called the “great Muslim rebellion” but more properly described as “the diverse conflicts involving Muslims” in the eighteen-sixties.³⁸

The successful suppression of all anti-Qing forces in Gansu between 1862-1872 included large scale population movement (from Shaanxi westward), massacres (in Ningxia and Suzhou), and negotiated surrenders (at Hezhou). This period gave the Qing state a chance forcefully to rearrange local society in the northwest, to prevent the recurrence of religious feuding and lawsuits. Zuo Zongtang, in overall command of operations, resettled large numbers of defeated Muslims at a distance from non-Muslim communities, isolated them from one another, and coopted a crucial group of Muslim leaders, virtually all of them from the Khafiyya (Old Teaching), as Qing military and civil officials. In the long run, this policy succeeded in tying the northwestern Muslims more effectively than ever before to the Qing state and to China, but it did not work well in the short term. By the late eighteen-eighties violence was again on the rise between contentious groups of Muslims, and Muslim religious

³⁷ *Salazu dang'an shiliao* 198f.

³⁸ Basic sources on these bloody conflicts include K.C. Liu and Robert Smith, ‘The military challenge: The northwest and the coast’, in J. K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge 1980) xi/2, 202-273; and Nakada Yoshinobu, ‘Dōchi nenkan no San-Kan no Kairan ni tsuite’, *Chūgokū kenkyū* iii (Tokyo 1959) 71-159. Neither, however, stresses adequately the *local* quality of the various Muslim actions against the Qing.

disputes once again found their way to the Qing courts.

A young Khafiyya Sufi named Ma Rubiao started the troubles. Either through the influence of an Arab missionary named Selim who came to Gansu, or during his pilgrimage to Mecca, or both,³⁹ Ma Rubiao became involved in the Shādhiliyya, a Sufi order popular throughout the Muslim world. Though not very different from the Khafiyya of his ancestors, this new affiliation gave Ma Rubiao the impulse to reform his own *menhuan* (saintly lineage), to purify religious practice and bring it into conformity with what he had come to regard as “pure” Islam. Returning from his pilgrimage, Ma Rubiao followed a familiar pattern; he gathered disciples, drawn by his charisma and that of his texts and reformist ideas, and split the *menhuan*. As the latest innovators, for so they were branded by their opponents, Ma Rubiao’s reformist followers bore the condemnatory appellation of New Teaching, while his uncle Ma Yonglin led the Old Teaching resistance to change.

By 1887, feuds had broken out between the rival factions at Xunhua, and the escalation of fear began again. Given the Xunhua Salars’ ferocious reputation, religious feuding among them always represented danger to Qing officials. As the troubles continued and lawsuits multiplied, the authorities all over the province grew more concerned about widespread violence.

‘[Han] Nuri was a Xunhua Salar Muslim, leader of the Old Teaching at Gaizigong. He and the New Teaching adherent Han Si accused each other over an old grudge and started a feud (*xiedou*). Their contention was most turbulent, and could not be settled rationally. Governor-General Yang Changjun drew up an indictment and commanded the Xining prefectural office to hear the case, for Xunhua was in Xining prefecture. Woshikeng’e presided, and both litigants followed correct procedure...Nuri came to the prefect’s court and deposed that the Old Teaching esteemed and loved the Koran and saw the New Teaching as a heterodox teaching. He cited many precedents as proof, talking with confidence and composure... [He said that] the former Governor-General, Zuo Zongtang, had held that Gansu Muslim rebellions’ origins lay in religious disputes [between Muslims]. If religious litigations do not cease, armed conflict will be born. The roots of conflict are surely in the New Teaching...[At the end of Nuri’s deposition] Han Si sensibly stayed silent, not saying a word. Woshikeng’e held that Muslim religious disputes were commonplace, and sent both litigants back to Xunhua, ordering them to

³⁹ Guan Lianji and Liu Cihan, ‘Yibajiuwu nian He-Huang shibian chutan’, *Xibei shidi* iv (1983) 46-54, hold that Selim’s influence caused Ma’s conversion; Gao Wenyuan, *Qingmuo xibei Huimin zhi fan Qing yundong* (Taipei 1988) 433, claims that Ma became a reformer on the pilgrimage; and Ma Tong (*Shilue* 238) writes that Ma took Selim as his teacher in Gansu, then went to Mecca and received initiation in the Shādhiliyya.

settle their quarrel and feud no more'.⁴⁰

In the fall of 1894, as the Xunhua litigants argued in court, their followers fought it out in the streets of Xunhua, and Muslims were killed. The Hezhou commander Tang Yanhe decided to send Ma Yonglin and Ma Rubiao's father, Ma Yongrui, to mediate, since they held high status in the Huasi menhuan within which the feuds were taking place. Eager to forward his anti-reformist cause within the Huasi, Ma Yonglin secretly encouraged Hann Nuri to attack the New Teaching, which he did, killing at least two *ahong*. Khafiyya adherents also relate that Ma Yonglin knew that the Qing had severely depleted their northwestern defense forces in order to fight the Sino-Japanese War, and that he told Hann Nuri that there were no Qing armies west of Tongguan, in Shaanxi.⁴¹ Following long-standing Khafiyya custom, the New Teaching group sought relief from the Qing, sending representatives to Lanzhou, where they accused both Hann Nuri and Ma Yonglin before Governor-General Yang Changjun.

Like Lerchin in 1781, the Governor-General sent a trigger-happy military man to Xunhua, where he cut off eleven Salar's heads as a warning to religious disputants then had to face a Muslim population outraged by the brutal state intervention. For the next eighteen months, southern Gansu, especially Salar country, burned with complex conflict among locals; armies from all over the northwest converged; and tens of thousands of Muslims and non-Muslims, combatants and civilians, lost their lives and their property. Much of this suppression was undertaken by Muslim commanders within the Qing military, ending the violence with a complete victory for the state.

These cases demonstrate that the grounds of conflict over Sufism in northwest China lay in (1) the characteristics of the *ṭarīqa* as a socio-religious organization, (2) Qing officials' negative perceptions of some of its innovative qualities, (3) the relationship between its arrival in China and the activities of a variety of domestic religious sects, and (4) its identification as the cause of trouble among the Salars. State intervention in these conflicts, initially through legal decisions and later also through direct military action, contributed to their sanguinary results, as did official incompetence, malfeasance, and prejudice against Muslims. The overt charges in many suits —

⁴⁰ GNQSL 24.40a-41a.

⁴¹ Ma Tong, *Shilue* 240. This claim was, of course, entirely false.

major and minor differences in Muslim religious rituals — cannot be dismissed as superficial, for Gansu folks were clearly willing to kill and die for them, but neither can we conclude that the vocalization of the *dhikr* caused all the violence.

The initial divisions among Sufis in Gansu derived from the *ṭarīqa*'s capacity to connect disparate communities in a network of loyalty to the shaykh. Once the Khafiyya established itself after 1748, having defeated Ma Yinghuan's attempt to brand it heterodox, it spread throughout the southern half of Gansu, headquartered at Hezhou and in Salar country. Gedimu religious institutions had certainly not created so large and intimate a solidarity, but the Khafiyya only posed a problem when it had an equally successful rival, as the decision in Ma Yinghuan's 1748 suit made clear. Ma Mingxin's return to his native province in 1761, bearing the message, rituals, and texts of the Jahriyya, provided precisely that. The suits between Han Hajji and Hemaluhu in the seventeen-sixties, irresolutely handled by local and provincial officials, provided the Qing with evidence that they were dealing with something new in Gansu, Muslims who performed wild rituals and fought one another.

At first trying to be even-handed with these feuding Muslims, Zhang Qunfang and the other judges handed down lenient sentences, even in capital cases, and lamely ordered the litigants to behave themselves or return to their native places. In more obvious cases of violence, both Han Wu (Old) and Hemaluhu (New) were exiled from the northwest. In 1781, however, when Xinzhu bragged that he would destroy the New Teaching, Su Sishisan placed their *ṭarīqa* in direst jeopardy by killing him. The arrest of Ma Mingxin as the ringleader set the stage for Su Sishisan's rapid march to Lanzhou, Ma Mingxin's execution, and the bloody massacre of the New Teaching that summer. From then on, any Muslim group branded "New Teaching" automatically drew the suspicion, and potentially the "legitimate" violence, of the officials. The vengeful Jahriyya insurrection three years later confirmed this judgment, causing the Qianlong Emperor himself to wonder, "In this instance of the Muslim rebellion under Tian Wu — how could they manage, without cause or reason, to collect a crowd, set a date, and rebel?...In the end, why did they rebel? We must get to the bottom of this!"⁴²

From the seventeen-eighties, the continued growth of the proscribed Jahriyya went hand in hand with disintegrating cohesion

42 Wu Wanshan, *Qingdai xibei Huimin qiyi yanjiu* (Lanzhou 1991) 48.

throughout Chinese society. Muslims all over the empire, in Shandong and Henan as well as Gansu and Yunnan, came under close scrutiny as “different,” especially as violent, and both statute and judge began to distinguish between them and their non-Muslim neighbors in invidious ways. Ma Xiangfu’s protection racket worked, temporarily, because Gansu Muslims were terrified of being labeled as “New Teaching” in the eyes of the officials. Nayancheng’s competent, successful investigation and punishment of the Old Teaching adherents was probably the exception, not the rule. By 1858, when the Dan’ger case threatened to escalate into riots between Mufti adherents and the Salars, the Qing had lost control over a number of provinces. When local feuding broke out in the early eighteen-sixties between Muslim and non-Muslim militias in Shaanxi and Xining, and between Muslim groups in Salar country, the army could only march against “the Muslim bandits” and try to exterminate them, rather than making careful distinctions between “good Muslims” and “bad Muslims”.

Zuo Zongtang, commander of Qing forces in the reconquest of the northwest (1867-1873), attributed much of the violence to official incompetence, but he also blamed the New Teaching:

The reason the New Teaching must be cut off is that they make auguries to predict disaster and good fortune, inciting the stupid Muslims so that they join a rebellious group without knowing, just like the White Lotus and other sectarians...Some people claim that Ma Hualong [the Jahriyya shaykh] knew the future, that he knew a guest was coming before he arrived. He predicted that the government troops would withdraw, so the Muslims relaxed and it came true. He healed the sick, so many came to seek his help...they were like drunken men, believing in him utterly.⁴³

In short, the *ṭarīqa*’s resemblance to the leadership patterns of non-Muslim sectarians of nineteenth century China caused these officials to assume congruence and treat them all as religious bandits (*jiaofei*). State intervention was always accompanied by rumors of impending massacre of Muslims, which actually happened often enough that everyone knew it was possible. Local communities and Sufi solidarities armed themselves to resist, and confrontations such as Su Sishisan’s in 1781 and the Xunhua executions in 1895 set off large-scale fighting. But these cannot accurately be classified as wars between “the Muslims” and “the Qing”, for Muslims invariably fought on both sides, reflecting divisions among Muslims, often by loyalty to different Sufi orders.

⁴³ GNQSL 24.35b-37a.

Some Qing officials were able to recognize, however vaguely, the relationship between events in Gansu and the arrival of new ideas and institutions from the Islamic world to the west. The Jahriyya, especially, was seen as more militant, more foreign, more subversive of social order than other Muslim solidarities. Agui, who had put down the 1781 and 1784 violence, recommended disconnecting the Gansu Muslims from Xinjiang to prevent further infection. He also believed that the source of violence lay in Salar country and proposed more effective garrisons there.⁴⁴ Both of these policies reacted directly against the movement and presence of Sufis in Gansu, for the *ṭarīqa*'s establishment of strong connections among Muslim communities appeared to challenge state authority through that most insidious of criminal activities, voluntary association.

The Qing officials had, after all, a very incomplete understanding of Islam and Muslims. When they tried to describe the *ahong*, imam, or shaykh, they used the title *xiangyue*, the Confucian local dignitary assigned to instruct the people in proper behavior and obedience to imperial writ. Not comprehending the relationship between *ahong* or shaykh and individual congregations, they tried to restrict, or even forbid, the mobility of religious professionals whether for employment, further education, or missions in the shaykh's name. And they completely misconstrued the centrality of the mosque and the *ṭarīqa* within Muslim communities, for no such institutions existed in non-Muslim Chinese society, except for Buddhist and Daoist sectarian groups.⁴⁵

We must also note the importance of Qing perception of ethno-cultural difference in their judgment of Sufism as potentially subversive. In theory, the Emperor gazed on all of his subjects with equal benevolence and equal condescension, but his officials on the ground tended to share the prejudices of local non-Muslim society. In Gansu, the Salars were seen to be particularly violent and subversive of social order, as the Chinese-speaking Muslims were in southern Shaanxi and Shandong. When quarrels arose between Salars who belonged to competing Sufi orders, the state's local representatives responded with suppression that polarized local society, stimulated desire for revenge, and kept the northwest unstable for over a century.

⁴⁴ *Salazu dang'an shiliao* 147-152.

⁴⁵ An important passage in the Xunhua local gazetteer, *Xunhua ting zhi* of 1844, reprinted in *Salazu shiliao jilu* 99-103, presents these and other conventional but erroneous ideas about Sufism and Islam.

Finally, we may speculate on the causes of violent confrontations between Gansu Sufis over religious issues which were not so divisive elsewhere, such as the vocal *dhikr* and the wearing of shoes at funerals. These law cases argue for multiple causation and careful examination of local contexts. Certainly harsh natural and economic conditions, a complex polyethnic frontier society, the easy availability of arms and martial usages, and Qing maladministration all put insidious pressure on Muslim communities. The appearance of rival orders within a short period of time and the ensuing struggles over initiates, mosque-building, local decision-making power, and personal loyalty also played important roles in stimulating violence. The Qing officials chose to intervene in these internecine quarrels, exacerbating them and causing some Muslims to fear, not groundlessly, that the state intended to exterminate them. Equally important, these Muslims lived very far from the centers of their faith, especially vulnerable to messages coming from the west, especially likely to see a particular ritual form or article of belief as unquestionably true or sacred because it issued from the heartlands. When shaykhs such as Ma Laichi and Ma Mingxin returned from the *hajj* to lead them, they believed with passion and rigid dogmatism. Their loyalties, organized effectively through the *ṭarīqa*, brought them into deadly confrontation with one another and with the Qing state, in the courts and then on the field of battle.

L'YIHEWANI, UNE MACHINE DE GUERRE CONTRE LE SOUFISME EN CHINE?

LEÏLA CHERIF-CHEBBI

L'observateur étranger aurait bien du mal à trouver toute trace de mystique soufie dans l'islam de Chine¹ tel que le présentent aujourd'hui les autorités musulmanes de l'Association islamique de Chine. Il le jugerait au contraire d'une orthodoxie sans faille, s'appliquant à respecter les Cinq piliers de la foi, avec une prédilection marquée pour la nouveauté que constitue le pèlerinage, autorisé à titre privé uniquement depuis une dizaine d'années. Qu'en est-il des ordres mystiques soufis qui ont dominé l'islam du Nord-Ouest depuis le dix-huitième siècle, ont fait trembler l'Empire sur ses bases au siècle dernier? Ils ont été éclipsés par l'apparition, à la fin du dix-neuvième siècle, dans la province du Gansu, au Nord-Ouest, d'un mouvement réformiste d'inspiration wahhābite, l'Yihewani, de l'arabe *ikhwān* "frères". En quelques décennies, l'Yihewani s'est étendu à toute la Chine et est devenu un des principaux "enseignements religieux" *jiaopai* de Chine, dont les tenants se trouvent aujourd'hui au premier plan de l'administration islamique. Faut-il voir dans ce succès et dans le relatif effacement des confréries soufies, connues en Chine sous le nom de *menhuan*, une conséquence de sa lutte contre le soufisme? Au nom du "Respect du Coran et de la réforme des mœurs", l'Yihewani a condamné les pratiques des deux autres composantes de l'islam chinois, les ordres mystiques en tête, et le Qadīm.

L'Islam de Chine peut être divisé en trois vagues d'influence islamique successives ou trois grands groupes,² qui reflètent non seulement des pratiques rituelles, mais aussi des modes d'organisation différents. Le *Qadīm* (Gedimu) est le groupe le plus

¹ Par islam de Chine, nous entendons l'islam implanté en Chine propre, et en excluons par conséquent l'islam des peuples turcophones et persanophones du Xinjiang (ou Turkestan Oriental), proche de l'Asie centrale et sans liens profonds avec l'islam de Chine.

² A propos des différents modes d'organisation de l'islam de Chine, voir Jonathan Lipman, 'The Third Wave: Establishment and Transformation of the Muslim Brotherhood in China', *Études Orientales* xiii/xiv (1994) 89-106.

ancien: la mosquée est le cœur d'une petite communauté Hui. Les Hui, musulmanes de langue et de culture chinoises, quelque neuf millions aujourd'hui, sont dispersés sur tout le territoire chinois. La mosquée est administrée par un "Comité de gestion" — les notables de la communauté — qui pourvoit à son entretien, à celui de l'école pour la transmission des enseignements religieux aux enfants et de celui de l'*ahong* (*imām*) choisi par ce Comité. Chaque mosquée est indépendante des autres. L'islam qadīm, de rite ḥanéfite très largement majoritaire en Chine, est d'une orthodoxie qui exclut le mysticisme soufi. S'étant développé au cœur de la société chinoise dominante, il est accusé par les Yihewani d'avoir inclus des pratiques et des superstitions chinoises dans ses rites.

Le second groupe est celui des confréries mystiques ou *menhuan*, fondées par des soufis d'Asie centrale ou par leurs disciples chinois à partir du dix-septième siècle. Les confréries, héréditaires pour la plupart, se sont constituées autour de la tombe du fondateur (*gongbei*, de l'arabe *qubba*, "dôme") ou de l'école du maître (*daotang* "école de la Voie"). Organisées hiérarchiquement, bénéficiant du dévouement total de leurs fidèles, elles sont devenues, au Nord-Ouest densément peuplé de Hui, d'importantes forces politiques et économiques. Leurs rivalités ont entraîné les Chinois musulmans, au dix-huitième et surtout au dix-neuvième siècles, dans des soulèvements violemment réprimés qui ont dévasté cette région. Quand la grande révolte de la Jahriyya (qui pratique un *dhikr* oral, au contraire de sa rivale Khafiyya), toutes deux branches de la Naqshbandiyya, s'est éteinte en 1872, le Gansu avait perdu les trois quarts de sa population dans les massacres et les déportations.

Le troisième groupe est l'Yihewani, qui introduisit un type d'organisation nouveau — une mosquée centrale commande à plusieurs mosquées satellites — plus rigide que le qadīm et plus souple que celui des confréries soufies. L'Yihewani a connu des débuts difficiles, avant d'obtenir l'appui des pouvoirs musulmans locaux. L'histoire du mouvement durant la première période est relativement bien connue à travers les sources chinoises. Il n'en est pas de même pour celle du régime communiste, en raison de la rareté des sources écrites. Les conclusions présentées reposent donc sur de premières observations de terrain. Si de nos jours, l'Yihewani paraît avoir abandonné sa virulence d'antan, il reste profondément hostile au soufisme, dont il donne une image négative.

A ses débuts, l'Yihewani a manqué de peu d'être décapité. Les confréries soufies avaient presque réussi à faire exécuter le fondateur

de l'Yihewani, Ma Wanfu (1853-1934). Une telle vindicte a sa source dans la doctrine du mouvement, qui n'est exposée que dans les études des chercheurs chinois car les textes originaux sont peu ou pas accessibles. Le message yihewani est exprimé de manière simple, sous forme de sentences en quatre ou huit caractères, typiquement chinoises, et au travers d'un "Programme en Dix Grands Points".

Le credo yihewani, avec un sens de la formule admirable, tient en quelques mots, *zun Jing ge su* "Respecter le Coran et réformer les moeurs", et *ping Jing³ li jiao* "S'appuyer sur le Coran pour fonder la religion". C'est un réformisme scripturaliste, qui exige un retour aux textes originels du Coran et de la Sunna, peu différent de celui d'autres parties du monde musulman. L'injonction de réformer les moeurs a mis le feu aux poudres. Car les Yihewani ont systématiquement combattu tout ce qui leur semblait inspiré des coutumes chinoises, qui pervertissait l'Islam originel dans les rituels du Qadīm, ainsi que, de façon plus véhémence encore, les pratiques des confréries soufies: comme l'obéissance au shaykh, la pratique du *dhikr* et la vénération des tombes.

Le programme en dix points, élaboré par le fondateur et ses disciples dans les dernières années du dix-neuvième siècle, n'est qu'une liste d'interdictions:

— Ne récitez pas le Coran collectivement; l'un lit, les autres écoutent.

— Ne faites pas l'éloge du Prophète à voix haute.

— Ne récitez pas trop de prière de *du'ā'* (requêtes à Dieu).

— Ne vénerez pas les mausolées.

— Ne récitez pas la *tawba* (repentir) en groupe.

— Ne commémorez pas le jour anniversaire de la mort.

— Ne demandez pas expiation (*fidya*, rançon) pour le mort en récitant le Coran.

— Insistez sur les pratiques issues des Cinq obligations, non pas sur les pratiques annexes.

— Insistez sur les rites simples et faciles à pratiquer.

— Ne chargez pas un intermédiaire de lire le Coran pour vous, lisez-le vous-même.⁴

³ *Jing* désigne les textes canoniques classiques; les musulmans chinois utilisent ce terme soit pour les textes islamiques classiques en général, ce qui n'est pas le cas ici, soit plus spécifiquement pour le Coran et la Sunna, soit encore pour le seul Livre révélé.

⁴ D. Chen, 'Notes sur l'histoire de l'*Ihewaniyya* en Chine (d'après deux notes à Ma T. (1983 et 1986)', *L'Islam en Chine du sud-est à partir des documents épigraphiques* (Paris,

Ce programme s'inspire de la dénonciation de dix *bida'* (innovations néfastes) recensées par al-Birkawī (Birgili) dans son ouvrage parvenu en Chine à la fin du siècle dernier, *al-Ṭariqa al-muhammadiya*.⁵ Associé au mot d'ordre "Supprimons les *menhuan* (confréries mystiques)", il a été bien évidemment perçu comme une déclaration de guerre et a suscité une très vive hostilité des confréries, de plus en plus forte à mesure que l'Yihewani faisait des adeptes, et ralliait à lui de grands imams de ces confréries.

La première phase du mouvement est indissociable de l'itinéraire de son fondateur, Nūh Ma Wanfu ou Ma Guoyuan, du nom de son village d'origine (1853-1934).⁶ Celui-ci naquit à Guoyuan, dans ce qui est aujourd'hui le District autonome Dongxiang, à l'intérieur de la Préfecture autonome Hui de Linxia (autrefois nommé Hezhou et surnommé Mecque de la Chine), dans la province du Gansu. Ma Wanfu n'est pas Hui, comme la plupart des musulmans de Chine, mais d'origine Dongxiang, une caractéristique souvent omise des biographies. Les Dongxiang sont des musulmans de langue mongole, qui vivent dans les provinces du Gansu et du Qinghai. Ils sont proches des Hui, avec lesquels ils partagent la religion, les confréries mystiques, le patronyme et le mode de vie; les intermariages Hui-Dongxiang sont fréquents. Les Dongxiang se distinguent assez peu des Hui et, à Linxia, les Hui refusent de les différencier d'eux-mêmes. Ils sont réputés pour leurs qualités guerrières, mais surtout pour la ferveur de leur foi et de leur pratique de l'islam. Ma Wanfu connaissait d'autant mieux les confréries soufies qu'il naquit dans une famille d'imams de la confrérie Naqshbandiyya Khafiyya Beizhuang, qu'il étudia au sein cette *ṭariqa* et y enseigna de nombreuses années après avoir "endossé le manteau", c'est-à-dire avoir reçu le titre d'*ahong* (*imām*) à vingt-deux ans.

En 1886, il se rendit à trente-trois ans en pèlerinage à la Mecque, en compagnie de son ancien professeur et d'un chef Dongxiang Ma Huisan (?-1895). Le voyage, par voie à terre de travers l'Asie centrale, l'Afghanistan, l'Iran et l'Irak, dura un an et demi. Au cours de son pèlerinage, Ma Wanfu fut influencé par la doctrine wahhābite.

EHESS, 1991).

⁵ Y. Wang, 'Yihewani zongjiao gexin zhuzhang shultie', *Ningxia shehui kexue* xliii (1990) 41; la mention de l'ouvrage figure également chez T. Ma, *Zhongguo Yisilan jiaopai yu menhuan suyuan* (Yinchuan 1986).

⁶ La biographie la plus complète et sans doute la plus fiable de Ma Wanfu a été rédigée par Ma Kexun qui, en l'absence de sources écrites, a recueilli les récits de proches, ce qui lui confère un aspect quelque peu hagiographique. K. Ma, 'Zhongguo Yisilanjiao Yihewani pai de changdao zhe — Ma Wanfu (Guoyuan)', *Yisilanjiao zai Zhongguo* (Yinchuan 1982) 439-458.

Il étudia ensuite quatre ans à la Mecque, d'abord trois ans dans l'école d'un savant renommé, Khalil Pasha⁷ et aurait, dans le même temps, été formé par deux prêcheurs wahhābites, °Uthmān et Sālim.⁸ La dernière année se fit sous le patronage d'un autre savant, Abū Gayl qui lui fit savoir qu'il en savait assez et qu'il était temps pour lui de regagner son pays afin d'y réformer l'Islam.

En 1892, Ma Wanfu rentra par Canton, vers sa région d'origine; en route, il s'arrêta au Hubei où il enseigna durant un an aux habitants d'une petite ville, Laohekou. De retour au Gansu, il prêcha pendant deux ans dans le village de Ma Huisan, réunissant autour de lui étudiants et imams célèbres. Neuf d'entre eux formèrent avec lui ce que la tradition a désigné comme les "Dix grands *ahong*" de l'Yihewani. Ils semblent avoir été en majorité Dongxiang, et ne sont souvent cités que par des surnoms. De plus, certains des noms des "Dix grands imams" diffèrent, car chacun, dans la tradition populaire, a eu tendance à y placer l'imam renommé de sa région. Ma Wanfu élaborait avec eux la doctrine Yihewani, sur la base d'ouvrages rapportés de pèlerinage. Ces livres seront, symétriquement aux Dix grands *ahong* ou aux Dix grands points, surnommés les "Dix grands classiques" du mouvement. La production d'un ou plusieurs ouvrages religieux, après un pèlerinage à la Mecque assorti de quelques années d'études, assoit le prestige de tout réformateur chinois digne de ce nom. Ces ouvrages n'ont pu être tous identifiés, car les caractères chinois ne sont souvent qu'une lointaine transcription phonétique, tronquée parfois, de l'arabe. Citons-en certains: Muḥammad b. °Abd al-Wahhāb: *Khashf al-shubuhār*; Ibn Taymiyya: *Majmū'at al-fatāwā*; Muḥammad Amīn Efendi al-Birkawī: *Inqādh al-nā'imīn*; *al-Ṭariqa al-muḥammadiyya*; *Majālis irshādiyya*; et Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī: *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī* (ce commentaire du Coran en neuf volumes traduit l'influence d'Ibn Taimiyya et fait de son auteur le précurseur de la Salafiyya en Irak).⁹ Ces ouvrages révèlent une solide influence ḥanbalite et wahhābite, alors que l'école juridique qui domine la Chine est ḥanéfite. Toutefois, ni Ma Wanfu, ni l'Yihewani après lui, n'abandonnèrent jamais officiellement ce dernier rite. Mais, selon le professeur Ma Tong, l'Yihewani suivrait en réalité les rites ḥanbalites.

⁷ Ma Tong, et cela n'est confirmé nulle part ailleurs, indique que ce savant appartenait à la Khafiyya; on peut donc supposer que ce professeur était un shaykh Naqshbandī. Voir T. Ma, op. cit. 183-185.

⁸ T. Ma, ibid.

⁹ Y. Wang, op. cit. 42.

Le prêche de Ma Wanfu a suscité la colère des confréries de la région de Dongxiang, premières visées par son réformisme, et qui voyaient leurs imams se presser autour du réformateur. Pour des raisons assez obscures, Ma Wanfu participa activement en 1895, aux côtés d'un chef militaire Dongxiang, à une révolte musulmane qui embrasa le Qinghai et le Gansu. D'une rivalité entre confréries (l'origine de la querelle était de savoir s'il fallait nouer le turban pour la prière avec ou sans un pan qui retombe dans le dos!),¹⁰ la révolte se généralisa après que la répression se fut abattue sur tous les Hui sans distinction.¹¹ Ma Wanfu laissa passer le gros de l'orage en se cachant dans l'est du Gansu, à Jingning, puis revint vers l'ouest, à Monigou, où il y enseigna dix ans. Ces dix années furent celles du mûrissement de sa pensée et de la structuration de son prêche. Son mouvement se prénommat alors *Aiheli sunnai* "Gens de la Sunna". L'apparition du terme Yihewani (Frères), plus tardive, n'est pas datée avec précision. La plupart des auteurs indiquent que cette dénomination se référait au texte coranique "tous les musulmans sont frères" et ne veulent pas y voir, hormis Ma Tong ou Feng Jinyuan,¹² de lien direct avec l'organisation fondée par °Abd al-°Aziz en 1912.

Ma Wanfu rédigea, en collaboration avec ses étudiants, une compilation des ouvrages rapportés de la Mecque, sous le titre *Buhali Zande* (?) "Guide des égarés".¹³ Les vingt copies de cet opuscule furent détruites par le seigneur de guerre de Linxia, Ma Anliang (1855-1918), adepte du Huasi, une branche de la Naqshbandiyya Khafiyya. Les étudiants de Ma Wanfu à Xining récrivirent l'ouvrage en chinois et en *xiaoerjing*, notation du chinois en alphabet persan, et le publièrent sous le titre *Huijiao duben* (Manuel de religion Hui).

L'opposition des confréries, qui accusaient Ma Wanfu d'être un fauteur de troubles, le poussa, en 1907, à se rendre à Xi'an, capitale provinciale du Shaanxi, comme simple étudiant; moqué par les autres en raison de son grand âge, sa science religieuse trahit son

¹⁰ Z. Gao, 'Jianlun yisilan jiaopai zhi zheng de lishi suyuan yu woguo shehui zhuyi shiqi de jiaopai tuanjie', *Gansu minzu yanjiu* iii-iv (1985) 45.

¹¹ Voir au sujet de cette révolte J. Lipman, 'Patchwork society, Network Society. A Study of Sino-Muslim Communities', in Magnes (éd.), *Islam in Asia* (Jerusalem 1984) ii, 261-262.

¹² J. Feng, *Zhongguo de Yisilanjiao* (Yinchuan 1991) 64.

¹³ Traduction donnée par D. Chen sur les indications de T. Ma. D'après le sens de cette traduction, nous pouvons suggérer un titre arabe *Burhān al-zanādiqa*.

identité.¹⁴ Il se rendit ensuite à Ankang où il fut imam. La cohabitation s'est déroulée plus pacifiquement à Ankang, parce que, d'une part il n'y avait pratiquement pas de soufis au Shaanxi, et que d'autre part, le Qadīm à Ankang ne s'est jamais opposé aussi vivement à l'Yihewani que les confréries ou que les tenants du Qadīm à Xi'an.¹⁵ En 1911, à la chute de l'Empire, croyant qu'un changement dynastique allait abolir les poursuites contre lui, il rentra à Linxia, où il fut responsable de la grande mosquée Nanguan. Las, Linxia qui abrite une vingtaine de sous-branches de *turuq* (sur la quarantaine que compte la Chine) allait se révéler fatale. La confrontation se fit plus vive, à la mesure de son succès grandissant. Les confréries en appelèrent au gouvernement provincial contre ce trublion qui mettait en péril la paix sociale. Il fut banni avec interdiction de prêcher au Gansu. Il partit donc vers l'ouest, pour le Xinjiang en 1914. La protestation des confréries avait eu d'autant plus de succès qu'elle était appuyée par Ma Anliang. Ce dernier, fort d'une ancienne fraternité d'armes avec le seigneur de guerre du Xinjiang, fit poursuivre Ma Wanfu jusqu'à Hami, ville la plus orientale du Xinjiang, car la renommée de prêcheur de ce dernier en cette ville avait atteint le Gansu et alerté ses ennemis. Ma Wanfu fut arrêté en décembre 1917 et transporté en fourgon cellulaire vers le Gansu pour y être exécuté. Début 1918, il fut délivré par une troupe envoyée par le seigneur de guerre musulman du Qinghai, Ma Qi, et conduit de Xining.

La réussite de son évasion changea le cours des choses. L'Yihewani, jusqu'alors localisé au Gansu et dans les provinces avoisinantes, pratiquement inconnu du reste de la Chine, à deux doigts d'être éradiqué par les confréries soufies aidées de certains pouvoirs locaux de chefs militaires ou de province, allait acquérir une tout autre ampleur.

Une chance historique allait permettre à l'Yihewani de connaître un destin différent, et lui épargna de ne devenir qu'une secte musulmane parmi tant d'autres au Nord-Ouest. L'appui des pouvoirs musulmans qui ont contrôlé les provinces du Qinghai, du Gansu et du Ningxia, des années vingt à la fin des années quarante, une

¹⁴ Bai Shouyi a rédigé une biographie assez anecdotique de la vie de Ma Wanfu, notamment sur son séjour au Shaanxi et à la fin de sa vie à Xining. Voir 'Zhongguo Yisilan jingshi chuan', *Bai Shouyi minzu zongjiao lunji* (Beijing 1992) 441-443.

¹⁵ Sur l'opposition entre Yihewani et Qadīm à Xi'an, voir J. Feng, 'Cong fenlie dao tuanjie de Shaanxi Yisilan jiaopai', *Zhongguo Yisilanjiao yanjiu* (Xining 1987) 276-290.

organisation axée sur le prêche et l'enseignement, en firent un mouvement de premier ordre sur tout le territoire chinois.

Depuis l'installation du fondateur de l'Yihewani à Xining,¹⁶ le mouvement a inversé la situation en sa faveur dans les régions contrôlées par les chefs militaires musulmans: Ma Qi (1869-1931), dont le pouvoir initialement cantonné au Qinghai s'est étendu au Gansu durant les années vingt, son fils Ma Bufang (1903-1975), ainsi que Ma Fuxiang (1876-1932) et son fils Ma Hongkui (1892-1970) pour le Ningxia. Ces seigneurs de guerre, tous originaires de Linxia au Gansu, ont trouvé dans le soutien à l'Yihewani, à ses thèmes fédérateurs, une assise, une légitimité religieuse à leur pouvoir, tout en se constituant une clientèle de religieux qui leur étaient redevables d'un appui armé, social et économique, au détriment des confréries dont la puissance leur portait ombrage.

Ma Qi, qui fut jusqu'au bout un militaire fidèle à la dynastie Qing, s'était installé à Xining au Qinghai en 1911. Il se révéla, en plus d'un guerrier, un administrateur hors pair et un habile politique. Il se constitua une armée solide qui lui permit de mater les révoltes tibétaines qui secouaient le joug chinois.¹⁷ Sa rivalité avec son ancien protecteur Ma Anliang (mort en 1918, ce qui lui laissa le champ libre pour dominer le Gansu), l'incita certainement à sauver Ma Wanfu. Surtout, il avait perçu les potentialités offertes par cette nouvelle secte. Les confréries étaient par trop divisées pour lui accorder un soutien unanime, et leurs chefs se posaient en concurrents de son pouvoir, par l'ascendant qu'ils exerçaient sur leurs fidèles, par leur puissance économique et même militaire. Ma Qi avait tenté une première fois d'introduire l'Yihewani à Xining, en faisant appel en 1914 à un des "Dix grands *ahong*", Zhe Zigou (certainement un surnom), pour prendre la tête de la Grande mosquée Dongguan de Xining, la plus importante de la province, rénovée par les soins du seigneur de guerre. Durant deux ans, Zhe Zigou tenta d'imposer les préceptes de l'Yihewani à Xining, mais sans succès, et fut renvoyé à Linxia en 1916. Ma Wanfu, au

¹⁶ L'organisation de l'Yihewani à Xining est décrite par D. Liu, 'Zhongguo Yisilanjiao Yihewani pai zai Xining de chuanbo', *Zhongguo Yisilanjiao yanjiu* (Xining 1987) 291-308.

¹⁷ Ma Qi est dépeint comme un héros qui a contribué à garder le Tibet dans l'orbite chinoise, se montrant intransigeant sur tout abandon de souveraineté dans les régions qu'il contrôlait. Voir J. Lu, 'Ma Qi zai Xizang bian shishang de gongzi', *Linxia wenshi ziliao xuanji* v (Linxia 1989) 73-76. Plus de la moitié des Tibétains vivent hors de ce qui est aujourd'hui la Région autonome du Tibet, principalement au Sichuan, au Qinghai (1 million dans chacune des provinces) et au Gansu (400 000).

contraire, réussit à rallier à lui de nombreux imams et personnalités religieuses de la ville et, lors de ses prêches, le vendredi, il ne manquait pas de louer son bienfaiteur. A partir de 1923, Ma Wanfu se rendit également dans les districts avoisinants de Xining. Il finit sa vie à Xining, entouré du plus grand respect.

Ma Qi, puis son fils Ma Bufang parvenu au pouvoir en 1932, ont utilisé la force pour imposer l'Yihewani, quand le prêche ne suffisait pas à gagner imams et mosquées. Les heurts furent nombreux, décrits de façon très laconique par nos sources. En 1923, à Xunhua, un district à l'est de Xining et proche du Gansu, ils firent plus de soixante morts, avant que les Yihewani parviennent à y imposer leurs imams. En 1940, les Yihewani voulurent détruire la grande mosquée soufie de Dongxiang au Gansu; les affrontements durèrent trois mois et firent cent-cinquante morts.¹⁸ Une illustration plus complète de ces actions coercitives figure dans la biographie d'un shaykh soufi Naqshbandī Ma Guozhen (1870-1963), dirigeant à la dixième génération du *menhuan* Bijiachang affilié à la branche Khafiyya, qui fut l'un des opposants les plus résolus de l'Yihewani; il fut par ailleurs un grand patriote et assumait de hautes responsabilités sous le régime communiste. En 1936, Ma Bufang,¹⁹ qui était profondément attaché à l'Yihewani, au contraire de son père pour lequel l'adhésion paraît avoir été dictée par l'opportunisme, envoya des prêcheurs investir toutes les mosquées de Linxia. Ma Guozhen s'y opposa avec force. Lui et les fidèles obligèrent l'imam qu'on voulait leur imposer à se retirer, barricadèrent la porte d'une mosquée célèbre de Linxia et déployèrent une banderole réclamant "la liberté de croyance religieuse". Arrêté, Ma Guozhen déclara qu'il préférerait mourir plutôt que de vivre à genoux; il fut finalement relâché deux mois plus tard, à la suite de pressions des notables et de la population.²⁰ L'Yihewani supportait si mal la concurrence, que la Salafiyya, une branche issue d'une scission interne à la fin des

¹⁸ T. Ma, *Zhonguo Xibei Yisilanjiao de jiben tezheng* (Lanzhou 1990) 8.

¹⁹ Ma Bufang (1903-1975) s'enfuit à Taïwan en 1949. Il résida en Egypte de 1950 à 1957, date à laquelle l'Egypte a noué officiellement des relations avec la Chine. Il assumait ensuite le poste d'ambassadeur de Taïwan en Arabie Saoudite. En mai 1961, accusé de corruption, il démissionna et demeura en Arabie Saoudite jusqu'à sa mort. Une partie de sa famille réside à Taïwan, mais quelques trois mille Hui, qui furent ses proches, vivent aujourd'hui en Arabie Saoudite et sont accueillis à bras ouverts en Chine depuis quelques années.

²⁰ T. Li, 'Aiguo zongjiao xuezhe — Ma Guozhen', *Linxia wenshi ziliao xuanji* v, 109-118.

années trente, fut elle aussi durement réprimée par Ma Bufang, alors même qu'elle était soutenue par son oncle. Entravée dans son développement avant l'arrivée des communistes au pouvoir, son essor date de la fin des années soixante-dix.²¹

L'appui des seigneurs de guerre musulmans contre les confréries, s'est traduit par l'emploi de la coercition là où le rapport de forces était favorable, au Qinghai et au Gansu. Il a pris des biais plus pacifiques, et tout aussi efficaces pour la conquête du terrain religieux, quand la contrainte ne pouvait être utilisée.

Au Ningxia, Ma Fuxiang favorisa l'Yihewani pour l'enseignement rénové que ce mouvement proposait, mais il ne semble pas qu'il ait voulu en faire un instrument privilégié de pouvoir. En effet, Ma Fuxiang, qui reçut une instruction confucéenne classique, portait une grande attention de la diffusion de l'enseignement chez les Hui et prônait une éducation moderne, qui complétait le cursus traditionnel en arabe et persan par la littérature et la culture chinoises. Il offrit des aides matérielles substantielles et se servit de son pouvoir politique en faveur de nombreux projets mis sur pied souvent loin de la région où il exerçait son influence, à Pékin et à Shanghai notamment.²² Son fils Ma Hongkui, venu au pouvoir au Ningxia à partir de 1924, car son père assumait diverses fonctions hors du Ningxia, a au contraire largement utilisé l'Yihewani pour des fins politiques au Ningxia, en interrompant, après la mort de son père, les subsides que ce dernier versait aux écoles musulmanes hors de la province. Ma Hongkui éprouva des difficultés à parvenir à ses fins, parce que son cousin, chef militaire comme lui, était un adepte de *ṭarīqa*, et sa mère, une fervente pratiquante du Qadīm, mais surtout, parce que les confréries étaient trop puissantes pour être attaquées de front. Il proclama ouvertement n'avoir aucune préférence pour tel groupe religieux ou tel autre.

La rivalité entre Yihewani et *ṭuruq* fut âpre au Ningxia dans les premiers temps de la propagation de l'Yihewani, en raison de la virulence du prêche. Le plus grand imam yihewani au Ningxia fut Hu Songshan (1880-1956).²³ Issu d'une famille de religieux de la

21 Sur l'histoire de la Salafiyya, voir, entre autres, Y. Da, 'Zhongguo Yisilanjiao Sailaifeiye pai shulüe', *Zhongguo Yisilanjiao yanjiu wenji* (Yinchuan 1988) 157-170.

22 'Xingban Huimin jiaoyu', *Ningxia san Ma* (Beijing 1988) 20-25. L'article, laudatif, est le seul qui ne porte pas de nom d'auteur.

23 Pour une biographie détaillée de Hu Songshan, mais dans laquelle les dates font parfois défaut: Z. Ye, 'Ningxia Yihewani zhuming jingxuejia Hu Songshan', *Qingdai Zhongguo Yisilanjiao lun* (Yinchuan 1981) 308-325.

Khafiyya, il eut un professeur yihewani et commença très tôt, vers 1902, à propager ses enseignements. Son opposition déterminée au soufisme lui fit détruire le mausolée de son père, mort en 1898. Son acte provoqua une vive émotion au sein des confréries, et Hu Songshan fut incarcéré plusieurs mois. Jusqu'aux années vingt, l'opposition entre soufis et Yihewani provoqua des heurts violents de Helan, et à Guyuan où l'imam yihewani fut enfermé et empêché à prêcher par la Jahriyya. Beaucoup de religieux quittèrent l'Yihewani à cause de ces tracasseries. Hu Songshan lui-même, après son incarcération, avait renoncé à prêcher durant trois ans et s'était fait commerçant. Pour remédier aux défections et aux difficultés, une faction "tiède" de l'4, conduite par Hu Songshan, décida de ne plus s'en prendre aux confréries, de modérer l'extrémisme du prêche, sur le principe que "chacun se conduise comme il l'estime approprié", "chacun s'occupe de ses affaires", "pas d'ingérence".²⁴ La même attitude prévalut au Shaanxi face au Qadim. Cette évolution du mouvement vers une normalisation lui attira les sympathies des plus modérés, notamment hors du Nord-Ouest.

Ma Hongkui s'ingénia à rendre l'Yihewani populaire par d'autres moyens. Par l'intermédiaire de la "Délégation pour le Ningxia de l'Association islamique de Chine", il tenta d'introduire plusieurs mesures, mais sans grand succès: la "très grande réforme", vers le milieu des années trente, de la prière du Vendredi, qui aurait obligé les fidèles d'un lieu à se rendre à la mosquée la plus ancienne près de leur lieu de résidence, revenait à imposer le système yihewani de "mosquées centrales" (que nous exposerons plus loin); autre mesure préconisée, mais avec aussi peu de succès, faire de la commémoration de la naissance du Prophète une cérémonie plus importante que celle du sacrifice. Plus fructueuse en revanche, fut l'aide de Ma Hongkui à l'enseignement coranique. Il finança largement les mosquées, en distribuant dans toute la province un grand nombre de bourses, ou encore un petit capital qui permettait aux mosquées d'investir en terres, cheptel ou immobilier.²⁵

Car l'argent fut le nerf de la guerre que menait l'Yihewani contre les confréries. En effet, l'Yihewani avait popularisé une formule en huit caractères, *chile bu nian, nianle bu chi* (quand on mange, on ne lit pas [le Coran], quand on lit, on ne mange pas), qui interdisait à un imam de recevoir paiement de ses services pour sa lecture du Coran

²⁴ W. Mian, *Ningxia Yisilan jiaopai gaiyao* (Yinchuan 1981) 119-121.

²⁵ W. Mian, *ibid.* 122-124.

à l'occasion de cérémonies. L'Yihewani proscrivait également tout don au shaykh d'une confrérie. C'était couper ainsi les confréries (et les imams du Qadīm) d'une source importante de revenus.

A l'opposé, la doctrine yihewani, en recommandant le strict accomplissement des "Cinq obligations" avant toute autre, remettait à l'honneur la pratique tombée en désuétude de la *zakāt*, qui se substituait ainsi aux dons volontaires. Une gestion rigoureuse de ce revenu et l'aide matérielle des seigneurs de guerre permettaient aux Yihewani d'assurer un revenu régulier à leurs imams, alors qu'ordinairement les imams étaient choisis et rémunérés par les fidèles constitués en Comité de gestion de la mosquée et changeaient souvent d'affectation. Wang Yongliang souligne que cet allègement apparent des charges des fidèles que représentait la cessation de dons à l'imam ou aux confréries fut pour beaucoup dans la popularité de l'Yihewani. Il est vrai que les *turuq* tiraient amplement profit de leurs fidèles; elles possédaient souvent les terres sur lesquelles travaillait une paysannerie pauvre. En plus de leurs possessions, les confréries recueillaient et recueillent aujourd'hui encore d'importantes sommes d'argent à l'occasion des cérémonies.

Wang Yongliang remarque que, passés les débuts, l'Yihewani s'est comporté, en matière d'exploitation de la générosité des fidèles, comme les autres groupes religieux, grâce à la *zakāt*, devenue obligatoire, les mosquées se sont constitué un patrimoine, tout comme les confréries. Pour les nécessités du prêche, elles formaient un grand nombre d'étudiants, qui étaient assurés, nous l'avons vu, de recevoir une rémunération régulière par la suite, détail qui ne pouvait manquer de susciter et fortifier certaines vocations. La Grande Mosquée Donguan de Xining possédait des terres, un parc immobilier important en location et des revenus de prêts à des marchands; elle avait été dotée par Ma Bufang d'un capital de 50,000 *yuan*. A Huangzhong, dans le Qinghai, une grande mosquée yihewani, où enseignèrent des imams célèbres dont les deux fils de Ma Wanfu, pouvait faire entretenir son personnel de onze personnes par 247 familles avec les 6800 livres de céréales pour prix de la location de ses terres et les 9000 livres fournies annuellement au titre de la *zakāt*.²⁶

Le soin avec lequel l'Yihewani constitua un réseau de mosquées centralisées et dépendantes, structura son mode d'enseignement et de

²⁶ Y. Wang, op. cit. 47.

prêche, fut un des atouts de son succès.

L'organisation de l'Yihewani, autour de la Grande Mosquée Dongguan, fut confiée à un cousin de Ma Qi, Ma Jun (*Ahong Changbozi* "Long cou"), mort la même année que lui, en 1931. Durant près de quatorze ans, Ma Jun fut un dirigeant énergique. Il ajouta à la doctrine yihewani des indications pratiques, qui réglaient le quotidien; ses premières recommandations furent, encore une fois, des condamnations des pratiques confrériques: interdiction de se soumettre à un shaykh; ne pas effectuer les "Cinq obligations" pour se consacrer à des actes superfétatoires était une "innovation" condamnable; il ne fallait pas célébrer de cérémonies d'anniversaire d'une mort (une pratique populaire répandue bien au-delà du soufisme). Les funérailles furent une des préoccupations majeures de l'Yihewani: il était interdit de porter le deuil (une coutume chinoise qui veut que les personnes se vêtent en blanc et se ceignent de chanvre), ou de pleurer; le cercueil devait être porté par quatre personnes et non huit, durant dix pas... La vie quotidienne était réglementée: les femmes devaient porter le voile, mais il était interdit de leur bander les pieds (car c'était une offense à la création divine). Les hommes devaient se laisser pousser la barbe à l'âge de vingt ans et couper leurs cheveux (et l'on ajoutait souvent qu'ils devaient porter des vêtements à la manière saoudienne). Il était interdit de souhaiter le Nouvel An aux non-musulmans, et de chanter ou de danser lors des mariages.²⁷ Ces prescriptions, et on pourrait en citer d'autres, illustrent le fondamentalisme profond de la doctrine, l'aspiration à se conformer à la Sunna dans les actes quotidiens, et incluaient une coupure avec le reste de la société chinoise.

Ma Jun fit de Dongguan le centre d'un dispositif de contrôle étroit des mosquées yihewani, et une institution destinée à la formation des prêcheurs d'une dimension inusitée en Chine. Les mosquées furent organisées hiérarchiquement: une "mosquée centrale" dite *hayi* (vraisemblablement de l'arabe *ḥayy* "quartier") supervisait de petites mosquées satellites. La prière du vendredi, les deux fêtes du sacrifice et de la rupture du jeûne se célébraient dans la mosquée centrale. Les imams formés dans la mosquée Dongguan étaient dépêchés, soit en tant que prêcheurs itinérants, soit dans des mosquées convoitées, protégés par la force au besoin comme nous l'avons vu, soit encore dans de nouvelles mosquées construites à côté d'anciennes qui n'avaient pu être investies. Pour faciliter la formation de ces

²⁷ D. Liu, op. cit. 291-308.

prêcheurs, une “Société pour le progrès de l’enseignement musulman”, située dans l’enceinte de la mosquée Dongguan, fut créée en 1922; Ma Qi en fut le président et Ma Jun le vice-président.²⁸

La structuration de l’Yihewani fut parachevée sous le règne de Ma Bufang qui nomma là encore un proche, ancien élève de Ma Wanfu, Ma Xiangchen (Ma Lu), qui dirigea Dongguan de 1932 à sa mort en 1946. La formation des imams était scindée en deux niveaux, le niveau moyen formait soixante-dix élèves, le supérieur cinquante. Logement et nourriture étaient assurés par Ma Bufang. Des imams de tout le pays, de Shanghai, du Hubei, du Sichuan, du Henan y firent leurs classes. Dongguan avait sous sa dépendance, en tant que quartier général des mosquées centrales, plus de mille mosquées au Gansu et au Qinghai.

A Xining, Ma Xiangchen contrôlait fermement les affaires religieuses et empêchait les activités des confréries. Ceux qui n’étaient pas Yihewani n’étaient pas autorisés à bénéficier de cérémonies funéraires, ne pouvaient faire célébrer leur mariage, il leur était interdit de rendre visite aux tombes, etc... des amendes étaient imposées aux contrevenants qui avaient recours aux imams non yihewani.²⁹

L’enseignement fut en définitive le meilleur instrument de propagation de l’Yihewani. L’effort porta, comme nous l’avons vu, sur la formation de prêcheurs. Le contenu des cours, autrefois centré uniquement sur l’apprentissage des textes sacrés et de leurs exégèses en arabe et en persan, fit une place à l’apprentissage du chinois, jusqu’alors laissé à la seule appréciation de l’étudiant. Les imams traditionnels ne savaient souvent que lire le Coran et la Sunna, sans en comprendre le sens profond. L’idée fondamentale fut qu’il serait beaucoup plus aisé pour des jeunes de pouvoir s’appuyer sur des traductions chinoises afin de saisir plus rapidement et plus facilement la signification de textes parfois hermétiques. Leur apprentissage en serait accéléré d’autant.³⁰ L’Yihewani a systématisé ce type d’enseignement au Nord-Ouest, alors qu’originellement, Ma Wanfu refusait que l’enseignement religieux pût être dispensé en partie en chinois. Il interdisait aux membres de sa famille de

²⁸ *Qinghai lishi jiyao* (Xining 1987) 288, 334.

²⁹ D. Liu, op. cit. 315-318.

³⁰ Y. Wang, op. cit. 45-46.

s'exprimer autrement qu'en dongxiang. Mais, après sa mort, ses fils, imams à leur tour, enseignèrent en chinois.

C'est au Ningxia, sous l'influence de Hu Songshan,³¹ que l'enseignement moderne fut le mieux développé, avec l'aide de Ma Fuxiang et de Ma Hongkui qui créèrent ou soutinrent plusieurs écoles de renom dans les années vingt et trente. Par l'apprentissage du chinois et des matières profanes comme les mathématiques, l'histoire et la géographie, de nombreux jeunes se familiarisèrent avec la société chinoise, mettant fin à la coupure qu'induisaient auparavant les études religieuses. Remarquons que l'enseignement bilingue avait été abordé depuis longtemps dans l'est de la Chine, en raison de l'imbrication des Hui au sein de la population chinoise, et que les premières traductions du Coran y furent toutes menées dès la fin des années vingt.³² Pour assurer l'apprentissage, les imams yihewani, au premier chef Hu Songshan, publièrent des traductions, rédigèrent des petits manuels explicatifs de l'Islam en un chinois proche du langage parlé, des glossaires et des grammaires d'arabe ou de persan.³³

Cet effort dans les domaines de l'enseignement et de la traduction, et la production littéraire qui en résulta, attirèrent l'intérêt de nombreux réformateurs de l'Est pour l'Yihewani. L'un des "Quatre grands imams" de la période républicaine, Wang Jingzhai (Wang Wenqing 1879-1949) fut très proche des thèses des Yihewani, qui le proclament l'un des leurs. Wang Jingzhai mena lui-même à bien une traduction du Coran. Il écrivit en 1936 un éloge funèbre de Ma Wanfu, qu'il avait découvert tardivement. Il a ouvert très largement aux Yihewani les colonnes de sa revue *Yiguang* (Lumière de l'islam), l'une des plus célèbres publications Hui dans la première moitié du vingtième siècle, favorisant ainsi la propagation des thèses yihewani qui reçurent un écho certain dans l'Est et le Sud-Ouest. L'imam réformateur de Shanghai, Ha Decheng, un autre des "Quatre grands imams", dans un petit opuscule intitulé "Brève introduction à l'Islam", préconisait l'étude personnelle du Coran, et condamnait fermement les pratiques liées au culte des tombes. Au Yunnan l'Yihewani fut introduit et propagé par l'imam Ma Ankang (Ma Jianzhi 1869-1957), un imam qui étudia auprès de Ma Wanfu.

³¹ Sur le rôle de Hu Songshan dans transformation de l'Yihewani en un mouvement patriotique et modernisateur, voir Lipman, 'The Third Wave' 89-106.

³² Au sujet de la traduction du Coran, voir Y. Jin, 'The ʔurʔān in China', in *Contributions to Asian Studies* xvii, 94-101

³³ W. Mian, op. cit. 130.

Grâce à son effort d'explication et de simplification, l'Yihewani obtint un large écho à travers toute la Chine. Soutenu par la puissance politique et financière des seigneurs de guerre, et relayé par des intellectuels de l'est ou du sud-ouest de la Chine, il devint un mouvement d'obédience nationale. Dans le Nord-Ouest, la propagation du mouvement s'effectua largement au détriment des confréries soufies.

Aux débuts du régime communiste, de 1949 à 1956, le pouvoir, prudent, a souvent maintenu en place les anciens notables Hui, même ralliés de dernière minute. Ainsi, le frère de Ma Hongkui, Ma Hongbin (1884-1960) a rejoint in extremis les rangs des communistes et a exercé des fonctions au sein du nouveau gouvernement (vice-président du Ningxia, du Gansu et président du Comité des Affaires pour les Minorités du Gansu). Il est difficile de savoir si l'une ou l'autre des factions a reçu un traitement plus favorable durant cette période. Les récits historiques s'achèvent pour la plupart en 1949; les événements, jusqu'en 1980, ne sont évoqués que de manière très parcellaire, passés de surcroît au filtre du discours idéologique. Il est plausible que, dans le Nord-Ouest, le pouvoir ait accueilli tous ceux qui voulaient le soutenir en échange de la paix sociale (des Hui avait lutté contre les Communistes jusqu'en 1952). La reconnaissance des élites religieuses en place ne pouvait que favoriser cette paix. Toutefois Yihewani et Salafiyya disposaient d'un meilleur crédit auprès des Communistes. Aux yeux de ces derniers, l'apparition des *menhuan* (confréries) était liée, dans les régions d'économie féodale agraire, à la constitution d'une classe de religieux qui, grâce aux revenus de la *zakāt*, avaient pu acheter des terres et devenir de grands propriétaires terriens, et qui avaient créé des confréries héréditaires afin de transmettre ces biens de leurs descendants. A l'inverse, l'Yihewani et la Salafiyya semblaient plus soucieuses de l'intérêt général des Hui.³⁴

Dès 1954, une fois la situation intérieure maîtrisée, les activités religieuses furent plus strictement contrôlées, et puis, de 1957 de 1979, elles furent combattues. Il y eut de grands procès contre les chefs de *turuq*: Ma Zhenwu, shaykh d'une sous-branche Jahriyya de la Naqshbandiyya au Ningxia, fut démis en 1958 et exécuté en 1961 à la suite d'un procès retentissant. Les Yihewani aussi eurent leurs martyrs, Ma Fulong et Chen Keli, morts en détention en 1970. Le

³⁴ *Huihui minzu wenti* (Beijing, 2^e édition 1982) 58-64. Texte rédigé en 1941.

premier, imam du Ningxia, avait étudié auprès de Hu Songshan, puis à l'Université de Pékin en 1946 où il fit connaissance de Ma Jian.³⁵ Il écrivit de nombreux articles durant son séjour de trois ans de Pékin, notamment sur la situation de l'islam au Ningxia. Son principal ouvrage, "Bref essai sur l'Islam", paru en 1954, fut aussitôt accusé d'appeler à "restaurer la religion féodale". Ma Fulong fut emprisonné jusqu'à sa mort en 1970, mais continua de pratiquer et d'écrire en prison, malgré les pressions subies pour qu'il apostasie.³⁶ Le second grand imam, Chen Keli, originaire du Henan, fut un traducteur infatigable; on lui doit entre autres un recueil de Sunna (*al-Tāj al-jamī' li'l-uṣūl fi ahādīth al-rasūl*).

Depuis le début des années quatre-vingts, l'islam, de nouveau autorisé, rattrape le terrain perdu. Les études qui lui sont consacrées se libèrent peu à peu, et non sans une certaine retenue, de la tutelle d'un discours imposé. Les événements des années noires sont évoqués, à grand-peine. Certains sujets restent tabous. Les conflits entre groupes religieux depuis 1949 (hormis les conflits internes des confréries) relèvent de cette catégorie. L'étude sur le terrain, essentiellement au Nord-Ouest, l'examen de la littérature religieuse existante, viennent combler quelque peu ces lacunes et permettent de tracer un portrait, partiel, de l'attitude de l'Yihewani face au soufisme. Les Yihewani sont aujourd'hui en position de force face aux adeptes des confréries. Leur attitude est moins agressive qu'auparavant, car ils ont appris à coexister avec les autres groupes religieux. Ils sont les premiers bénéficiaires de cette pacification.

Comme par le passé, les Yihewani ont su obtenir l'appui du pouvoir. Et ce n'est pas le moindre de leurs paradoxes que d'être favorisés, par le biais de l'*Association islamique de Chine*, par un régime communiste athée. L'Association est l'organisation musulmane officielle unique, fondée en 1953. Elle réunit tous les musulmans, sans distinction d'ethnie. Elle a pour fonction d'administrer les affaires religieuses musulmanes, d'être l'interface entre l'Etat et les musulmans, et la représentante officielle de l'Islam de Chine vis-à-vis de l'étranger. Les Hui y sont très largement majoritaires car leur dispersion géographique sur tout le territoire leur permet de

³⁵ Ma Jian, 1906-1978, fut le troisième des "Quatre grands imams" de la période républicaine, étudiant à al-Azhar dans les années trente, traducteur, entre autres, de Muḥammad 'Abduh et du Coran en chinois moderne.

³⁶ Notice biographique de Z. Hai rédigée en 1993, en post-face à la réédition de l'ouvrage de F. Ma, *Yisilan qianshuo* (ni lieu, ni date) 226-236.

multiplier les branches locales et d'apparaître comme les principaux acteurs de l'islam de Chine. Les Yihewani semblent les mieux placés, de par leur structuration nationale, la relative unité de leur dogme et leur rigorisme orthodoxe, pour incarner une cohésion que le régime pose en principe premier de sa politique vis-à-vis de l'Islam.

Les Yihewani sont présents en nombre au sein de l'*Association islamique de Chine*. On ne peut établir de relevé précis, car l'appartenance à un groupe, *Qadīm, tarīqa*, ou Yihewani, n'est mentionnée que tout-à-fait exceptionnellement. Lors de la disparition du maître de la confrérie Banqiao (de la branche naqshbandie Jahriyya), Ma Teng'ai (1921-1991), haut dignitaire du régime (membre du Comité permanent de l'Assemblée populaire nationale, du Comité de cette assemblée pour les affaires des Minorités, vice-président de l'*Association islamique de Chine*, etc.), la notice nécrologique publiée par la revue de l'Association, *Zhongguo Musilin (Musulmans de Chine)* n'a pu éviter de signaler son autorité sur le Banqiao.³⁷ Une autre exception a été faite par la revue (dépouillée sur environ neuf années, quatre puis six numéros annuels)³⁸ pour décrire l'attitude tolérante d'un imam yihewani du Ningxia, qui s'est refusé à imposer ses vues aux fidèles Qadīm de la mosquée qu'il a dirigée de 1979 de 1982.³⁹ L'islam de Chine, tel que l'Association veut en donner l'image, est unifié, d'une orthodoxie de bon aloi, et loin du mysticisme soufi.

Nous savons que certains dirigeants de l'*Association* sont yihewani, comme l'un de ses vice-présidents, de surcroît parent par alliance de Hu Songshan, ou le président de l'*Association islamique provinciale du Ningxia*. La plupart des branches locales, provinciales ou municipales de l'*Association islamique*, ont leur siège dans des mosquées yihewani. Les Instituts islamiques, gérés par l'*Association*, une dizaine aujourd'hui (dont un seul au Xinjiang où vit plus de la moitié des musulmans de Chine!), sont dirigés par les Yihewani. Au Ningxia, l'Institut était situé dans une mosquée yihewani, avant la construction d'un nouvel édifice financé par la Banque Islamique de Développement. Au Qinghai, l'*Association islamique* et l'Institut, se

³⁷ *Zhongguo Musilin* lxxiv (1991) 5-11.

³⁸ 1981-1982 et 1988-1994, hormis quelques numéros manquants.

³⁹ *Zhongguo Musilin* lxxv (1990) 48. Les notices nécrologiques se multiplient ces dernières années du fait de l'âge avancé de l'encadrement religieux formé avant la fondation de République Populaire. De plus, une génération (1957-1979) n'a reçu aucune formation religieuse, ce qui fait que les imams sont soit très âgés, soit très jeunes.

tiennent dans la Grande Mosquée Dongguan.

L'*Association islamique de Chine* a posé en principe que toutes les factions, même les plus modestes, devaient être représentées dans ses instances.⁴⁰ Mais qu'en est-il du pouvoir de ces représentants? Les chefs de confréries dirigent les Associations des districts ou des municipalités où ils sont implantés, s'ils sont en position dominante. Ils occupent aussi des postes de responsabilité au niveau régional, et de représentation au niveau national, comme nous l'avons constaté pour Ma Teng'ai. Seulement la base de leur pouvoir reste locale, tandis que les Yihewani ont une structuration nationale. Si les liens entre les mosquées yihewani semblent plus lâches que par le passé, et si certains affirment même que leur système s'est rapproché de celui du Qadīm et qu'il n'existe plus de mosquée centrale, la réalité est autre. La Grande Mosquée Dongguan de Xining continue à exercer le rôle de quartier général. Au niveau local, certaines mosquées *ḥayy* fonctionnent toujours. A Shizuishan, dans le nord du Ningxia, les fidèles convergent vers la mosquée centrale le vendredi; les grandes cérémonies sont présidées par l'imam de cette mosquée. A Weizhou, dans le sud-est du Ningxia, le même principe subsiste, mais en sus, l'imam principal est élu chaque année par ses pairs.

Ces informations, bien que parcellaires, indiquent que les Yihewani contrôlent l'administration religieuse. Il faut rappeler que, si une bonne part des activités religieuses s'organise sur une base privée, l'*Association islamique de Chine* conserve un droit de regard. Les Yihewani, par leur relative homogénéité et les liens qui les unissent, parviennent mieux que les autres à incarner la cohésion religieuse que l'Etat pose en principe. Dans ce cas, est-ce l'Etat qui se sert de la structuration existante du mouvement afin de mieux contrôler l'islam? Ou faut-il voir dans la proximité des Yihewani au pouvoir, le moyen pour eux d'utiliser l'appareil d'Etat? La question se pose avec plus d'acuité à mesure qu'une radicalisation récente de l'Yihewani est perceptible.

Les Yihewani, par l'*Association islamique de Chine*, disposent des ressources financières étatiques, chinoises ou étrangères. La répartition des subventions peut s'effectuer de manière sélective pour les aides à la construction de mosquées, leur entretien et celui de leurs écoles. A Lanzhou, la grande mosquée yihewani et siège de l'*Association islamique* — un imposant bâtiment circulaire pourvu de baies vitrées teintées et surmonté d'une immense coupole — a été

40 Z. Gao, op. cit. 45.

reconstruite il y a peu d'années. A Yinchuan, une mosquée yihewani du centre ville d'importance plutôt modeste par le nombre de croyants et qui ne menaçait pas de tomber en ruines, est aujourd'hui flambant neuve, avec coupole, minarets et carreaux de faïence blanche plaqués sur le mur extérieur.

L'attribution de subsides intéresse une activité essentielle des mosquées, l'enseignement religieux. L'entretien de l'école, qui est partiellement ou totalement pris en charge par les fidèles, est de plus en plus lourd. Un imam de Helan (Ningxia), pourtant Yihewani, déplorait que les écoles n'arrivent plus à subsister. Les petites, comme la sienne, fermaient chaque jour. Il ne lui restait plus que sept élèves sur une vingtaine auparavant, et il estimait qu'il n'en aurait plus d'autres, car pour lui, les jeunes une fois passés par le système scolaire chinois, se détournent par la suite des études religieuses. Pour tourner l'interdiction officielle de donner une éducation religieuse aux moins de dix-huit ans, les mosquées ouvrent dans leur enceinte ou sous leur dépendance des "écoles de langues", qui rappellent fortement les écoles sino-arabes d'avant 1949. Les "écoles de langues" ne sont ni plus ni moins des écoles religieuses. Par exemple, le cours d'anglais assuré à l'école de filles de la mosquée yihewani de Shizuishan consistait à faire apprendre la *shahāda* en anglais! L'encadrement est sous la responsabilité de l'imam, mais les cours de langues sont assurés par de jeunes laïcs qui se contentent parfois du logement et de la subsistance, et assurent travailler "pour Allah". Ces écoles, reconnues et encouragées officiellement, sont yihewani pour la plupart. Les autres groupes religieux se contentent d'écoles coraniques plus classiques.

Les Yihewani sont toujours actifs dans le prêche. Sur l'île de Hainan, à l'extrême sud-est de la Chine, quand un village de cette île a voulu renouer avec la religion islamique d'ancêtres lointains, il s'est présenté un imam yihewani de Linxia, envoyé par l'*Association islamique de Chine*; il reprenait des liens noués sous le régime nationaliste; à cette époque, un prêcheur yihewani s'était déjà rendu du Nord-Ouest jusqu'à l'île de Hainan pour y répandre la bonne parole.⁴¹ Par l'intermédiaire de l'*Association islamique de Chine*, les Yihewani ont la haute main sur le pèlerinage. Outre les responsables religieux envoyés à titre officiel et gracieux, les fidèles, depuis une dizaine d'années, peuvent se rendre à leurs frais en pèlerinage, mais

⁴¹ J. Thoraval, 'Religion ethnique, religion lignagère. Sur la tentative d'"islamisation" d'un lignage Han de Hainan', *Études chinoises* x (1991) 45-48.

doivent pour cela être approuvés par l'*Association*, et les listes sont longues. Les Yihewani, afin de remplir scrupuleusement l'une des "Cinq obligations", sont nombreux. Enfin, l'*Association islamique de Chine* choisit les étudiants qu'elle subventionne pour des études à l'étranger.

Comme pour la période d'avant le régime communiste, les ingrédients du succès yihewani, l'appui du pouvoir, le prêche et l'éducation dite moderne sont rassemblés. Un élément supplémentaire vient s'y greffer, l'islam extérieur. En plus d'aides financières, les Yihewani reçoivent l'appui doctrinal de l'islam extérieur, d'inspiration "fondamentaliste" voire "islamiste". Les missions de *da'wa* en Chine se multiplient. Les musulmans de Pékin sont coutumiers des visites d'officiels, d'hommes d'affaires ou de religieux de pays musulmans. La Chine de l'intérieur est sillonnée de groupes de prêcheurs. Les Pakistanais du *Djamā'at al-tablīgh* sont les plus assidus de ces tournées, suivis de missionnaires du monde entier: musulmans Anglais d'origine pakistanaise, Soudanais, Iraniens, Indonésiens, Bangladais et même Sri Lankais! sans compter les visites des coreligionnaires de Hong Kong. Tous ces groupes ont comme point commun de n'être pas des soufis, loin s'en faut. Les Yihewani se chargent de les convoyer, de leur servir d'interprètes, et leur font visiter les "bonnes" mosquées. Les soufis sont soigneusement tenus de l'écart. Non que le contenu des prêches en arabe ait une profonde influence, car personne ne le comprend; même leurs interprètes n'ont pas suffisamment de pratique de l'arabe parlé pour traduire au pied-levé; mais ces musulmans, représentants de l'orthodoxie et d'un Islam pur, sont auréolés d'un grand prestige, qui rejaillit sur leurs accompagnateurs. Ces derniers en attendent aide morale, matérielle, ou invitations de l'étranger.

L'apport doctrinal est fourni par les traductions d'auteurs musulmans, anciens ou contemporains, par deux canaux de traduction. Hong Kong traduit de l'anglais des ouvrages envoyés par l'*International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations* basée au Koweït. Les auteurs favoris sont les Frères musulmans Sayyid Quṭb ou al-Qardāwī, le Pakistanais Mawdūdī, l'Africain du Sud Ahmad Deedat (très controversé dans son pays mais qui bénéficie d'un grand prestige à l'étranger), etc. Certains ouvrages sont réimprimés en Chine populaire en éditions bon marché (le plus grand centre d'édition privée se trouve à Linxia, au Gansu). On trouve dans les librairies islamiques, outre de petits manuels de base sur la prière ou le pèlerinage, "La femme musulmane" de ʿĀʾisha Lemmu, "Les principes de l'Islam, vingt-neuf *khutba*" de Mawdūdī, ou, plus rare,

en arabe, *al-Tarbiya al-islamiyya wa-madrasat Ḥasan al-Bannā'* du Frère musulman Khurshīd Aḥmad.

Les traductions entreprises en Chine populaire, le second canal de propagation, croissent en nombre au point qu'elles paraissent tarir la production locale. Celle-ci s'exprime dans nombre de revues ou de journaux qui circulent largement de province à province; cette presse Hui a souvent une durée de vie limitée, car, ou l'enthousiasme s'émousse et les fonds viennent à manquer, ou elle est interdite par les autorités. Les traductions semblent parfois relever du hasard. Les ouvrages d'auteurs classiques (al-Nasafī, Ibn Nubāṭa, Maṣṣūr 'Alī Nāṣif), ou les réformateurs du dix-neuvième siècle, traduits dans les années trente (Muḥammad 'Abduh, Muḥammad al-Khuḍarī, ou un Libanais, Ḥusayn al-Jisr cité comme l'égal de 'Abduh ou d'al-Afghānī), publiés en éditions officielles, sont souvent reproduits par les imprimeries privées, meilleur marché. Les auteurs contemporains sont présents également: l'Égyptien Muḥammad al-Sha'rawī, azharite et un temps enseignant en Arabie Saoudite, Sayyid Quṭb, et son dernier ouvrage *Ma'ālim fi'l-ṭarīq*, mais la prudence est de rigueur. Il n'y a ni lieu d'impression ni nom du traducteur, l'introduction datée est souvent signée du seul prénom musulman. La parution très récente du dernier, et plus virulent, ouvrage de Sayyid Quṭb dénote une sensibilité à un islam radical contemporain, hostile au mysticisme. Que ces traductions aient une influence profonde sur le public de Chine reste à déterminer.

La littérature soufie, chants ou exégèses, subsiste en arabe sous forme de gros manuels, d'un prix trop élevé pour une diffusion courante. Ce sont des classiques utilisés dans les mosquées depuis des décennies, voire un siècle ou deux. Des opuscules de chants dont il est impossible de définir la provenance, ont été rédigés en chinois.

Alors que les rééditions bon marché fleurissent, les écrits des fondateurs de l'Yihewani comme Ma Wanfu, ou comme Hu Songshan qui fut pourtant proluxe, ne sont pas disponibles. Cette absence ne semble pas fortuite. Elle autorise le discours yihewani à s'adapter, à la fois aux courants de pensée les plus récents du monde musulman et à la situation de la Chine d'aujourd'hui.

L'Yihewani a renoncé à s'imposer par la force. Appliquant les consignes élaborées par l'*Association islamique de Chine*, qui reprend le *modus vivendi* établi dans certaines régions comme le Ningxia ou le Shaanxi, "que chacun s'occupe de ses seules affaires,

selon son propre rite, dans le respect mutuel”,⁴² il n’est plus signalé d’incidents violents ni d’occupation de mosquées par la force, ce qui ne signifie toutefois pas qu’il n’y en ait pas eu, depuis les années cinquante. Le soufisme est relégué à une place secondaire, et disparaît de l’islam officiel. Les ouvrages destinés à faire connaître l’islam de Chine à des visiteurs étrangers, d’un intérêt très limité, ne font aucune allusion à l’existence de différentes factions. Les Yihewani eux-mêmes occultent, tant que faire se peut, l’existence de confréries. Quand ils reçoivent des visiteurs étrangers, ils les tiennent à l’écart. Il ne faut pas y voir de retrait volontaire de la part des confréries, car le visiteur, quand il se présente, est cordialement accueilli.

Les Yihewani propagent une image négative du soufisme. Le maître à penser de la jeune génération, dans un ouvrage récent, “L’appel de l’Islam”, reprend les reproches habituels faits aux soufis: leur éloignement du monde et de ses obligations, leur prétention de approcher Dieu. Dans le cas de la Chine, le soufisme, venu d’Asie Centrale [et donc pas du berceau de l’Islam] il y a deux à trois siècles, a introduit une cassure dans un islam qui, selon lui, n’en avait pas connu durant sept cent ans. Si l’auteur, Yisimaer (Ismā’il), reconnaît des qualités aux différentes *turuq*, la plus récente, la Jahriyya, subit ses foudres: la Jahriyya n’a presque pas apporté de contribution aux enseignements ou à la propagation de l’Islam. Elle est entrée en guerre pour élargir son pouvoir religieux, ses ressources humaines ou matérielles. La préoccupation unique des grands maîtres a été d’acquérir puissance et richesses. Parce que ces derniers ont été réprimés par les Qing, ils ont été considérés comme des martyrs et ont obtenu la compassion.⁴³

Les affrontements internes aux confréries ont reçu un certain écho. Il y en eut en 1981 et 1982 à Linxia; au Ningxia en 1978 et en 1984. Plus grave, en février 1994, au Ningxia, le shaykh de la confrérie Jahriyya Shagou, Ma Liesun, vice-président de la *Conférence politique consultative de la Région autonome Hui du Ningxia*, membre du Comité permanent de la Conférence politique consultative nationale, a été arrêté, car tenu pour responsable des querelles intestines qui ont fait une quarantaine de morts dans les

⁴² Z. Gao, op. cit. 46.

⁴³ Yisimaer, *Yisilan de zhaohuan*, introduction non signée datée de 1412 de l’Hégire, 181-184. L’avant-propos a été rédigé à Tianjin. L’édition est de bonne qualité. C’est volontairement qu’il n’y a aucune indication qui puisse porter préjudice de son auteur ou ses imprimeurs.

rangs du Shagou. Une partie de ses fidèles reprochait à Ma Liesun d'être trop proche du pouvoir. Il a été condamné à quinze ans de prison; son fils et un professeur de la mosquée du Shagou de Yinchuan, l'ont été à perpétuité.⁴⁴ Pour le Shagou, cette condamnation est injuste: les autorités n'ont rien fait quand le parti opposé à Ma Liesun avait tué trente des leurs. A partir du moment où ce dernier a donné l'ordre de rétorquer et qu'ils ont tué neuf personnes (onze en réalité), la Sécurité les a aussitôt poursuivis. La répression a été sévère: la mosquée de Yinchuan a été dévastée, les ouvrages éparpillés, les étudiants renvoyés.⁴⁵ La mosquée accueillait auparavant quelques soixante-dix élèves, venus de toute la Chine; d'un bon niveau, ils étaient capables de tenir une conversation simple en arabe, ce qui est hors de portée du premier étudiant venu; leur cursus comprenait des matières comme l'histoire et la géographie, et ils disposaient d'une méthode moderne de persan. Il ne restait que quatre élèves en novembre 1994, l'imam responsable était très jeune. A Lanzhou, les fidèles du mausolée du fondateur de la Jahriyya ont été inquiétés quelques temps. Les Yihewani exprimaient une réprobation, sans une once de compassion ou de compréhension.

A l'inverse, la répression qui a fini par s'abattre à Xining, après des émeutes qui se sont déroulées en septembre et octobre 1993, à cause d'un livre considéré par les musulmans comme insultant pour l'Islam et interdit, a suscité l'émoi.⁴⁶ Le centre de la protestation était la Grande mosquée Dongguan de Xining, quartier général de l'Yihewani, siège de surcroît de l'*Association islamique de Chine*: les forces de l'ordre ont pris d'assaut la mosquée où s'étaient retranchés les émeutiers, le 7 octobre 1993.⁴⁷ La mosquée a elle aussi été vidée de tous ses étudiants et d'une partie de son personnel religieux. Si un jeune Hui du Ningxia racontait qu'un an après, elle n'ouvrait plus que pour la prière, il semble qu'en réalité elle ait pu reprendre ses activités habituelles. Dans ce cas-ci, les musulmans s'étaient comportés avec courage pour une noble cause!

44 Summary Worldwide Broadcasting, 24 février 1994.

45 Entretien personnel Yinchuan, novembre 1994.

46 Un ouvrage de questions-réponses pour enfants paru au Sichuan en 1993, copie d'un livre de Taïwan, publiait un dessin sur lequel figurait un musulman en prière à côté d'un porc, et posait la question: 'Qui sur terre n'a jamais mangé de viande de porc mais a vu les cochons marcher?' Des manifestations contre l'ouvrage ont eu lieu au Nord-Ouest fin août de 1993 et se sont poursuivies alors que l'ouvrage avait été interdit et retiré de la vente ce mois-là.

47 *Églises d'Asie* clxv (1993).

Les Yihewani ne cessent d'ailleurs, dans leurs discours, même si les écrits sont plus modérés, de brocarder les querelles, l'arriération, l'ignorance, la pauvreté — nudité, saleté, maladies — des croyants de *turuq* qui vivent souvent dans les régions les plus déshéritées du Ningxia et du Gansu. Ils racontent que, dans ces régions perdues, on trouve un “*menhuan* de l'Œuf” dont les croyants égorgeraient rituellement les œufs avant de les manger, idem pour le “*menhuan* du Poisson”; ou encore qu'une jeune fille avait été donnée en mariage de un poulet pour éviter de la marier à l'extérieur de la confrérie!

Le nombre et la qualité des études consacrées par les chercheurs chinois au soufisme prouve l'ouverture et la relative transparence des ordres mystiques chinois, en même temps que le peu de risques politiques qu'il y a à aborder le sujet. Pour caricaturer, ils font partie d'un certain folklore. Leur histoire, souvent dramatique, s'y prête.⁴⁸ Zhang Chengzhi, un auteur Hui, a rédigé une histoire romancée de la Jahriyya, qui s'arrête en 1920, à la mort de Ma Yuanzhang (grand-père de Ma Liesun) lors d'un terrible tremblement de terre. L'ouvrage fut réalisé en collaboration avec Ma Liesun qui, n'en doutons pas, est en train d'inscrire un nouveau chapitre à l'histoire de la confrérie. L'Yihewani est au contraire un sujet rarement abordé dans sa période contemporaine, à peine quelques mentions dans des études régionales, ou des généralités qui n'offrent que peu d'informations. Cette retenue des chercheurs est signe en Chine d'un sujet sensible.

Les Yihewani n'ont pas renoncé à amener à eux les adeptes des confréries. Ils encouragent les conversions et en font grand cas quand c'est un adepte de *ṭarīqa*. Pour la jeune génération, tous les musulmans doivent être unis afin de restaurer le vrai Islam, mis à mal par vingt ans d'interdiction de pratique religieuse, mis à mal par les massacres qu'ont entraînés les révoltes des confréries au dix-neuvième siècle — sans elles, les musulmans seraient aujourd'hui cent millions en Chine, indique-t-on. L'obsession du terrain perdu par l'Islam dans la société Hui se retrouve aussi bien chez les imams âgés que chez les jeunes Yihewani qui dénoncent les maux de la société chinoise actuelle. Dans l'Est, il s'agit de ramener vers les mosquées une population Hui largement laïcisée, qui souvent ne se

⁴⁸ Sur l'histoire de la Jahriyya, voir F. Aubin, 'En Islam chinois: quels Naqshbandis?', in M. Gaborieau, A. Popovic, & T. Zarccone (eds.), *Naqshbandis. Cheminements et situation actuelle d'un ordre mystique musulman* (Istanbul 1990) 491-572.

déplace qu'à l'occasion des grandes fêtes et ignore tout des rituels. Au Nord-Ouest, il faut que les adeptes des ordres mystiques les rejoignent, afin que tous les musulmans soient "frères", pour rétablir les forces de l'Islam. Une fois la vraie foi restaurée, les confréries pourront de nouveau exister si elles le veulent. Les imams yihewani traditionnels s'inquiètent — sans la condamner ni l'exclure — d'une nouvelle génération d'imams, surnommés "wahhābites", fascinés par l'activisme musulman, qu'ils côtoient à travers leurs lectures, les missions de prêche, les récits des pèlerins, de plus en plus nombreux, ou des étudiants qui ont été à l'étranger; pour ceux-ci, le Pakistan, l'Arabie Saoudite et le Soudan paraissent être des destinations de prédilection.

Malgré un changement d'attitude, l'objectif ultime de l'Yihewani — tant chez la génération ancienne et institutionnalisée, que chez la nouvelle génération, formée par la précédente dans les écoles de mosquée, souvent après un cursus scolaire normal, mais dont la réflexion s'est nourrie d'un apport extérieur radical — reste celui de forger un islam unifié dans lequel les ordres mystiques, avec leurs particularismes, n'ont pas droit de cité. Puisque ces ordres n'ont pas disparu, ni ne sont susceptibles de disparaître à court terme, ils sont isolés, exclus du discours officiel, tenus à l'écart des liens avec l'islam extérieur, ou sont transformés en un objet de folklore, voire de dérision.

La radicalisation de l'Yihewani, sensible dans les protestations contre des ouvrages insultants pour l'Islam, pourrait entraîner une réaction plus énergique du régime, alors qu'il dépend, par bien des aspects, institutionnels et prosaïquement financiers, de ce régime. L'élément modérateur constitué par les imams de la première génération, formés sous le régime nationaliste ou au plus tard dans les années cinquante, est appelé à s'estomper avec la disparition des anciens. Sans génération intermédiaire, les jeunes activistes "wahhābites" vont se retrouver seuls face au pouvoir et à la société chinoise. Sauront-ils transiger?

Quant aux confréries, elles sont arrivées à un tournant crucial de leur histoire. Leur force repose sur des bases rurales, en situation de détresse matérielle, d'arriération sociale. Ces bases seront amenées à rétrécir au gré de l'urbanisation et de l'accès au monde moderne. La structure des confréries doit s'adapter à la Chine d'aujourd'hui, alors qu'elle fait figure de survivance du passé et que la tendance à la fragmentation se perpétue, les querelles intestines des vingt dernières années l'ont démontré. Néanmoins, les confréries ont déjà prouvé leur capacité à survivre, à renaître de leurs cendres comme l'a fait la

Jahriyya dans le passé. Leur éloignement du pouvoir les a rendues moins dépendantes, moins sensibles à un durcissement du régime envers l'islam. En cas de changement de régime, et celui-ci s'annonce pour bientôt, il est probable que la société chinoise refusera d'accorder aux Hui et aux musulmans les privilèges dont ils disposent aujourd'hui: subventions, constructions de mosquées, d'écoles, impunité (les Hui, petits commerçants, sont engagés dans toutes sortes d'activités très en marge de la légalité et qui font la prospérité de villes du Nord Ouest comme Linxia ou Tongxin). Les confréries apparaissent bien mieux armées pour résister à un futur probablement plus hostile.

VI

ANATOLIA, IRAN, AND THE BALKAN

OPPOSITIONS AU SOUFISME DANS L'EMPIRE OTTOMAN AUX QUINZIÈME ET SEIZIÈME SIÈCLES

AHMET YAŞAR OCAK

Qu'est-ce, pour un historien, que "l'opposition au soufisme" comme aspect de l'histoire des peuples musulmans? Comment un historien doit-il aborder le problème, ou bien, dans quelle perspective doit-il le situer par rapport à l'ensemble de l'histoire de l'Islam? En tant que historien, nous pensons que si nous considérons le sujet comme un problème purement théologique, nous risquerons de mésestimer les facteurs sociaux qui sont à la base de ce phénomène d'opposition au soufisme et nous n'aurons pas la chance de comprendre les causes sociales, culturelles et politiques qui se cachent derrière ce phénomène dans le monde musulman, y compris l'Empire ottoman.

A notre avis, "le soufisme" et "l'opposition au soufisme" sont deux phénomènes jumeaux dans l'histoire de l'Islam, puisqu'ils sont nés en même temps, et qu'ils se sont développés l'un parallèlement à l'autre. Nous pouvons apprécier le soufisme, comme étant à la fois un mouvement social et une institution socio-religieuse, qui vient s'ajouter à la société musulmane moyenâgeuse dès le neuvième siècle.¹ L'opposition au soufisme se manifeste au fond comme un mouvement de réaction pour chasser celui-ci de la société musulman, car on le tenait pour responsable de son désordre, et en fin de compte, de la création de problèmes pour le pouvoir politique. Donc

¹ Personnellement nous ne considérons pas le soufisme dans l'histoire de l'Islam, comme un phénomène purement mystique développé uniquement dans son structure traditionnelle; mais nous le considérons largement dépendant du changement et du développement de la structure sociale des sociétés musulmanes du Moyen Age.

ces deux mouvements parallèles constituent un phénomène complexe ayant trois aspects liés l'un à l'autre: aspects religieux, politiques et sociaux.

Si l'on jette un coup d'œil sur l'histoire du soufisme dans l'Empire ottoman, nous remarquons qu'elle avait brillamment commencé en ce qui concerne les relations avec le pouvoir central et avec le public. Cette histoire intéressante commence avec un fait curieux: des soufis originaires d'un mouvement hétérodoxe dit *baba'î*, révoltés contre le pouvoir seldjoukide, ont joué un rôle considérable dans la naissance du pouvoir ottoman. Fondé au début du quatorze siècle en Anatolie du Nord-Ouest, dans la région frontalière byzantine, le Beylicat ottoman a été soutenu par des soufis hétérodoxes dits simplement *Abdālān-ı Rûm* (ou *Rûm Abdalları*),² issus du mouvement *baba'î*³ rattachés aux diverses branches du courant qalandarî, dérivé de la *Malāmātiyya* khorasanienne.⁴ Ces soufis furent les prototypes des derviches bektachis du seizième siècle.⁵ Au fur et à mesure, les ordres mystiques orthodoxes, tels que la *Rifā'iyya*, la *Mawlawiyya*, la *Khalwatiyya* et la *Naqshbandiyya* ont pris leur place sur les territoires de l'Etat ottoman. C'est ainsi que depuis le quinzième siècle jusqu'au seizième, les cinq grands ordres mystiques cités ci-dessus, y compris la *Bektāshiyya*, ont été implantés dans l'Empire ottoman.

S'il faut aborder dans une perspective générale la période allant du début de la fondation de l'Etat ottoman jusqu'à la fin du seizième

² Cf. Fuad Köprülü, *Les origines de l'Empire Ottoman* (Paris 1935) 113-123; id., 'Abdal Kumral', 'Abdal Mehmed', 'Abdal Murad', 'Abdal Musa', *Türk Halk Edebiyat Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul 1935).

³ Il s'agit d'une révolte socio-religieuse à tendance hétérodoxe des Turcomans nomades et des paysans d'Anatolie centrale et du Sud-Est, en Anatolie seldjoukide en 1240, qui a eu lieu contre le gouvernement, dirigé par un certain cheikh turcoman nommé Baba İlyās-i Khorasānî et par son *khalifa* Baba İshāq (voir par ex., Claude Cahen, 'Baba'is', EI; id., *Pre-Ottoman Turkey* (London 1968) 221-222, 241, 354; id., *La Turquie Pré-ottomane* (Paris-Istanbul 1988) 95, 200, 334. Cf. aussi notre étude intitulée *La révolte de Baba Resul ou la formation de l'hétérodoxie musulmane en Anatolie au XIIIe siècle* (Ankara 1989).

⁴ La *Malāmātiyya* est un courant soufi né au neuvième siècle en Iran, dans la région khorassanienne. Ce courant soufi, couvrant certains ordres mystiques iraniens, a donné naissance au onzième siècle en Iran, à la *Qalandariyya*. Sur la *Malāmātiyya* et la *Qalandariyya*, voir par ex., F. De Jong, Hamid Algar, et C.H. Imber, 'Malāmātiyya', EI; Tahsin Yazıcı, 'Qalandariyya', EI.

⁵ La *Bektāshiyya* est un ordre soufi se rattachant à Hājji Bektāsh-i Velî (m. 1271), un cheikh turcoman, contemporain de Jalāl al-Dīn-i Rūmī. Sur la *Bektāshiyya* voir par ex., J. Kingsley Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes* (London 1937); voir aussi, R. Tschudi, 'Bektāshiyya', EI; Suraiya Faruqi, *Der Bektaschi Orden in Anatolien* (Wien 1981).

siècle, il n'est guère possible de parler d'une opposition systématique aux milieux soufis. Pour cette période, durant laquelle l'Etat ottoman n'était pas encore systématiquement centralisé, et la classe des ulama ne s'était pas encore formée, les milieux soufis avaient une forte influence non seulement sur les milieux politiques et bureaucratiques, mais aussi sur le peuple.

On sait bien que l'Islam populaire turc avait d'ailleurs déjà au onzième siècle en Asie centrale, une forte coloration soufie apportée par Ahmed-i Yesevî et ses derviches.⁶ Ainsi rattaché depuis des siècles à une tradition islamique profondément caractérisée par l'ésprit mystique, la structure socio-culturelle et socio-politique de l'Etat ottoman était tout naturellement sous l'influence du soufisme jusqu'au quinzième siècle. Pendant la fondation de l'Etat, la plupart des chefs militaires et des bureaucrates aussi étaient initiés au contact de différents babas turcomans (ceux que nous avons déjà cités ci-dessus sous le nom de *Rûm Abdalları*)⁷ qui étaient à la fois des chefs politiques et religieux des tribus nomades et semi-nomades.

Il ne s'agissait donc pas, dans cette période de fondation, d'une quelconque opposition contre les milieux soufis. Les ordres mystiques, même de tendance hétérodoxe, tels que la Yasawiyya, la Wafā'iyya, la Qalandariyya et la Ḥayḍariyya, ont retrouvé dans les territoires de l'Etat ottoman, approximativement jusqu'à la fin du quinzième siècle, un terrain très convenable pour s'implanter confortablement.⁸ Jusqu'à la révolte de cheikh Bedr el-Dīn dans le premier quart du quinzième siècle,⁹ aucune source ne nous signale

⁶ Voir Fuad Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar* (Ankara 1966, 2e éd.) 49-62; id., Ahmed Yesevî, İA.

⁷ Les sources ottomanes de l'époque en question, telles que les *Tavārikh-i āl-i ʿOthmān* anonymes (Bibl. de l'Université d'Istanbul, ms. turc nr. 2438, fol.42b-43a), *Tavārikh-i āl-i ʿOthmān* de ʿAshiqpashazāde, éd. de ʿĀli Begh (Istanbul 1332/1916) 195-196, et *Kiṭāb-i cihannümā* de Mehmed Neshri, éd. de F. Taeschner (Leipzig 1955) i, 46-48, 98 et quelques autres, nous signalent l'appartenance de certains bureaucrates et de plusieurs dignitaires du palais ottoman, et même de certains généraux, à de différents cheiks des *Abdālān-i Rûm*.

⁸ A ce propos, voir notre article intitulé 'Les milieux soufis dans les territoires du beylicat ottoman et le problème des *ʿAbdalan-i Rum*' (1300-1389)', in E. Zachariadou (éd.), *The Ottoman Emirate (1300-1389)* (Rethymnon 1993) 145-158.

⁹ Cette révolte en question est éclatée en Anatolie de l'Ouest et dans les Balkans vers les années 1416 ou 1421, juste après l'invasion de Timur, sous Mehmed I. D'après ce que disent les sources ottomanes, dirigé par l'ex-*qadi* asker de Musa Çelebi, sur Cheikh Bedr el-Dīn, à la fois un très illustre savant et un soufi, cette révolte a bouleversé sérieusement l'Etat ottoman. Sur la révolte de Cheikh Bedr el-Dīn voir Michel Balivet, *Islam, mystique et révolution armée dans les Balkans ottomans. Vie du Cheikh Bedreddīn le "Hallāj des Turcs" (1358/59-1416)* (Istanbul 1995).

un mouvement antisoufi dans l'Empire ottoman, ni de la part du pouvoir politique — si ce n'est la déportation d'un petit groupe de *Rum Abdalları* par Orkhān Begh —, ni même de la part des ulama qui n'avaient pas encore, à l'époque, atteint à l'apogée de leur puissance. Mais, la révolte de cheikh Bedr el-Dīn marqua apparemment un tournant historique pour différents comportements antisoufis dans l'histoire ottomane, aussi bien chez le pouvoir central que chez les ulama.

Cette révolte, conservant encore son caractère problématique, a sans doute poussé le gouvernement ottoman à être prudent vis-à-vis des milieux soufis; ainsi par exemple, au quinzième siècle sous Mourad II, les derviches bayramis ont-ils été strictement surveillés par le gouvernement central. De plus, Hājji Bayrām-ı Velī (m. 1430), le grand cheikh des derviches bayramis, a été convoqué à Edirne pour être interrogé directement en présence du sultan. D'après ce qui ressort des témoignages, le gouvernement aurait soupçonné une insurrection soutenue par les Bayramis en Anatolie centrale.¹⁰ Il ne s'agit donc pas là, d'une réelle opposition antisoufie, mais plutôt d'une inquiétude politique non seulement dans le cas de cheikh Bedr el-Dīn, mais aussi dans celui de Hājji Bayrām-ı Velī.

En ce qui concerne les réactions manifestées par le peuple contre certains groupes de derviches hétérodoxes, tels que les Qalandaris, le *Vilāyetnāme-i 'Othmān Bābā* nous renseigne parfaitement sur les querelles passées entre les derviches qalandaris et la population de certaines villes balkaniques.¹¹ La riche documentation de cet ouvrage comporte une dizaine d'anecdotes très intéressantes sur l'interrogation et la condamnation des derviches qalandaris dans les cours ottomanes au temps de Mehmed II.¹² Nous avons également des témoignages de la même époque sur les condamnations au bûcher des Hūrūfis à Edirne par le grand vizir Maḥmūd Pasha (m. 1474) et Fakhr al-Dīn-i 'Ajamī (m. 1461),¹³ ainsi que sur une grande opération de déportation des derviches qalandaris en Anatolie, sous

¹⁰ A ce sujet, voir par ex., Fuat Bayramoğlu, *Hacı Bayram-ı Velī, Yaşamı-Soyu-Vakfı* (Ankara 1983) i, 25-27.

¹¹ Cf. Küçük Abdāl, *Vilāyetnāme-i Sultān 'Othmān Bābā*, ms. Adnan Ötügen, İl Halk Kütüphanesi (Ankara), nr. 643, fol. 26b, 27a, 30b, 53a etc.

¹² Cf. ibid.; id., 'Kalenderi Dervishes and Ottoman Administration from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Centuries', in Grace M. Smith and Carl W. Ernst (eds.), *Manifestations of Sainthood in Islam* (Istanbul 1994) 248-249.

¹³ Cf. Tāshköprüzāde Aḥmed Efendi, *al-Shaqa'iq al-nu'māniyya fī 'ulamā' al-dawla al-'uthmāniyya* (Beyrouth 1395/1975) 38-39.

Bāyezīd II, en 1492, implantés dans différentes régions balkaniques.¹⁴

Mais le seizième siècle fut dans l'histoire de l'Empire ottoman, une période de véritable antisoufisme qui se manifesta contre les différents milieux soufis, tels que les Khalwatīs, les Gülşenīs, les Bayrāmī-Malāmīs, les Qalandarīs etc., non seulement de la part du gouvernement, mais aussi des ulama. Des études sur une série de documentation se composant des documents d'archives, des chroniques, et des manuscrits écrits directement par certains soufis, nous obligent à approcher cet antisoufisme manifesté au seizième siècle dans l'Empire ottoman, comme une question strictement liée aux conditions socio-politiques et socio-économiques de l'Etat qui avait à l'époque, certaines difficultés à la fois extérieures et intérieures.

Parallèlement aux désavantages causés par les guerres aux frontières occidentales et orientales,¹⁵ des insurrections éclatées en Anatolie,¹⁶ des troubles sociaux surgis dans la capitale impériale¹⁷ auraient poussé les ulama et les autorités gouvernementales à ne pas penser du bien des milieux soufis, auteurs des doctrines non-conformistes, tels que les Gülşenīs, les Bayrāmī-Malāmīs et les Qalandarīs. D'après ce qui ressort des témoignages des documents d'archives, ils prenaient sans doute ces milieux soufis pour les premiers responsables de tous les désordres sociaux et religieux dans la société ottomane.¹⁸

A notre avis, c'est là le point essentiel; car, le problème fondamental n'est rien d'autre que ces désordres sociaux sur lesquels

¹⁴ Cf. par ex., Oruç b. ʿĀdil, *Tevāriḫ-i āl-i ʿOsmān*, éd. F. Babinger (Hannover 1925) 138; Khwāja Saʿd al-Dīn, *Tādj al-tawāriḫ* (Istanbul 1279); Solaqzāde, *Tāriḫ-i Solaqzāde* (Istanbul 1289) ii, 304; Ocak, 'Kalenderi dervishes' 249.

¹⁵ Voir par ex., Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire. The Classical Age (1300-1600)* (London 1973) 35-40; Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (Cambridge 1976) i, 55-111.

¹⁶ Cf. Hanna Sohrweide, 'Der Sieg der Safaviden in Persien und seine Rückwirkungen auf die Schiiten Anatoliens im 16. Jahrhundert', *Der Islam* xli (1965) 145-186; Shaw, *History* i, 86-92.

¹⁷ Il s'agit des troubles socio-religieux dans le peuple, causés par les discussions sur la conception de *waḥdat-i wujūd* qui aboutissaient souvent parmi les gens de basses classes, à un athéisme absolu, d'où de graves disputes et confrontements entre ces gens et les ulama à Istanbul de l'époque.

¹⁸ Voir par ex., les documents d'archives, tirés des *mühimme defterleri* du seizième siècle, publiés par Ahmet Refik sous le titre de *On Altıncı Asırda Rafızılık ve Bektaşılık* (Istanbul 1932) 21-59. Dans ces documents, on parle des Qalandarīs sous le nom de *ishuq*.

les ulama et les milieux soufis sont unanimement convenus, mais de différents points de vue. Pour les ulama, ce sont les milieux soufis qui étaient à l'origine de ces désordres sociaux. En revanche, selon les milieux soufis, c'est l'Etat lui-même qui en était responsable à cause de sa mauvaise politique. De toute façon, ces deux points de vue différents, manifestés à la fois par les témoignages des *mühimme defterleri* (régistres ottomans) des *şer'yye sicilleri* (régistres juridiques ottomans) et par les ouvrages écrits par certains auteurs ottomans de l'époque, tels que Mavlānā 'Īsā,¹⁹ nous montrent une seule chose: Le seizième siècle, particulièrement les trois derniers quarts, y compris l'époque de Soliman le Magnifique, constitue une période de désordres et de troubles sociaux dans l'Empire ottoman.²⁰ D'autre part, n'oublions pas, comme nous allons en parler ci-dessous, le cas de Birgivi Mehmed Efendi qui est, une fois encore, le grand témoin de ces désordres sociaux auxquels il s'est chargé lui-même de faire face sa vie durant.²¹

Nous pensons qu'il serait inconcevable de voir comme une simple coïncidence ce croisement à la même époque, des désordres sociaux avec les mouvements Malāmīs et Gülşenīs, ayant trouvé des terrains favorable non seulement en Anatolie mais aussi en Roumélie. Dans ce contexte, on peut considérer comme normale l'opposition du gouvernement central à ces milieux soufis non-conformistes, qui sont à ses yeux le responsable de ces troubles sociaux qui finissent par prendre une couleur politique, et devenaient ainsi un élément d'anarchie sociale secouant sérieusement le *nizām-ı 'ālem* (l'ordre social).

D'ailleurs, à travers nos sources, nous pouvons rencontrer un certain nombre d'événements qui reflètent la politique "antisoufie" du gouvernement contre les milieux soufis cités ci-dessus. Par exemple, nous avons une série d'inculpations et de condamnations à

¹⁹ Cf. Mavlānā 'Īsā, *Jāmi' al-maknūnāt*, ms. Bibl. de l'Université d'Istanbul, fonds Ibnu'l-Emīn, nr. 3263, fol. 23b-24a, 56b-58b.

²⁰ Pour un tableau général de l'Empire ottoman au seizième siècle, il suffit de s'adresser aux ouvrages cités de İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire* 121-186; Shaw, *History* i, 70-87, 169-175.

²¹ Pour Birgivi Mehmed Efendi, voir par ex., Nev'izāde 'Atāyī, i, 179-181; Kātip Çelebi, *Mizān al-ḥaqq fī ikhtiyār al-aḥaqq* (Istanbul 1306) 120-125; İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire* 183-185. Il s'est consacré presque toute sa vie à la lutte contre les désordres sociaux. Il a écrit plusieurs ouvrages destinés à les enlever. Voir par ex. son *al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiyya* [plusieurs éditions, et beaucoup des exemplaires en manuscrit, par ex. ms. Süleymaniye (Fonds Hāji Maḥmūd Efendi) nr. 2028; *al-Seyf al-šārim fī 'adem-i javāz-i vaqf al-menqūl ve al-darāhim*, ms. Süleymaniye (Fonds Hāji Maḥmūd), nr. 1136/1; *Jilā' al-qulūb*, ms. Süleymaniye (Fonds Shehīd 'Alī Pasha), nr. 1477 etc.

mort contre les milieux Malāmī-Bayrāmīs, Gülşenīs, et même Qalandarīs dont les héros sont des cheikhs illustres, tels que Oghlan Cheikh Ismāʿīl-i Maʿshūqī, cheikh des Bayrāmī-Malāmīs, décapité en 1535 avec ses douze disciples,²² cheikh Ḥusām al-Dīn-i Anqarawī, pendu en 1561 à Ankara,²³ cheikh Ḥamza Bālī, décapité également à Istanbul en 1565.²⁴ En ce qui concerne les milieux gülşenīs, nous connaissons très bien le cas d'Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī, convoqué à Istanbul, et interrogé par le sultan Soliman le Magnifique lui-même.²⁵ Et plus dramatique encore est le cas de cheikh Muḥyī al-Dīn-i Qaramānī qui fut décapité en 1550 à Istanbul, suivant la fatwa d'Abū'l-Suʿūd Efendi.²⁶ Les chroniques et les *mühimme defterleri* de l'époque, nous donnent plusieurs exemples de déportation et d'arrestation des cheikhs Qalandarīs tout au long du seizième siècle.²⁷

Maintenant, nous devons nous poser cette question: la politique antisoufie du gouvernement ottoman contre certains milieux soufis est-elle vraiment une "politique antisoufie" au plein sens du terme? Ou bien, en d'autres termes, est-ce que cela peut se traduire par une vraie opposition au soufisme manifestée par le gouvernement ottoman? C'est une question à laquelle nous ne pourrions pas répondre affirmativement. En tout cas, nous allons revenir ci-dessous à la réponse de cette question, mais pour le moment, nous voulons nous arrêter sur l'antisoufisme des ulama ottomans.

En ce qui concerne le comportement de certains milieux ulama ottomans aux quinzième-dix-septième siècle contre les milieux soufis, nous croyons pouvoir utiliser le terme d' "opposition au

²² Sur Ismāʿīl-i Maʿshūqī voir, Nevʿizāde ʿAṭāyī, *Dhāyī-i Shaqāyīq* (Istanbul 1268) 89; Sārī ʿAbd Allāh Efendi, *Thamarāt al-fuʿād* (Istanbul 1288) 249; Laʿlīzāde ʿAbd al-Bāqī, *Sergodhesht-i Malāmiyya*, ms. Süleymaniye (Fonds Pertev Pasha), nr. 636, fol. 123a.; Gölpinarlı, *Melâmîlik ve Melâmîler* 48-50.

²³ Au sujet de Ḥusām al-Dīn-i Anqaravī voir ʿAṭāyī, *Dhāyī* 70; Sārī ʿAbd Allāh, *Thamarāt* 256-257; Gölpinarlı, *Melâmîlik* 71.

²⁴ A propos de Ḥamza Bālī, cf. ʿAṭāyī, *Dhāyī* 70-71; Munīrī-i Belghrādi, *Silsilat al-muqarrabīn*, ms. Süleymaniye (Fonds Shehid ʿAlī Pasha), nr. 2189, fol. 140a-141a; Laʿlīzāde, *Sergodhesht* fol. 126b-127b; cf. aussi Gölpinarlı, *Melâmîlik* 72-77.

²⁵ A propos de cet événement voir Gölpinarlı, *Mevlânâ'dan Sonra Mevlevîlik* (Istanbul 1953) 323-324.

²⁶ Sur Cheikh Qaramānī voir Ertuğrul Düzdağ, *Şeyhulislâm Ebussuud Efendi Fetvâları* (Istanbul 1972) 193-195; Muḥyī-i Gülşenī, *Manāqib-i Ibrāhīm-i Gulşenī*, éd. Tahsîn Yazıcı (Ankara 1982) 360-361, 378-382.

²⁷ A ce propos voir, H. J. Kissling, *Sultan Bâjezid's II. Beziehungen zu Markgraf Francesco II. von Gonzaga* (München 1965) 13.

soufisme”. Et cet antisoufisme nous reflète très curieusement un esprit religieux tout à fait puritainiste. Prenant sans aucune exception, les milieux soufis pour seuls responsables de la “déformation” et du “désordre” religieux dans la société ottomane de l’époque, cet esprit antisoufi visait à purifier le peuple de tous les résidus “hérétiques et sataniques” déposés par les soufis. Au seizième siècle, cet esprit puritain justement représenté par un certain Birgivî Mehmed Efendi (m. 1573); d’où le célèbre mouvement *qadizâdeli* au milieu du dix-septième siècle qui, à notre avis, est le seul mouvement antisoufi au vrai sens du mot, dans l’histoire ottomane.²⁸

Auteur de plusieurs ouvrages et opuscules destinés au grand public, *müderris* dans une petite *medrese* provinciale à Birgi (une petite bourgade en Anatolie occidentale près d’Izmir), Birgivî Mehmed Efendi s’était donné à cette fonction durant toute sa vie. Quand on étudie ses ouvrages, on peut remarquer clairement l’influence dominante de l’illustre savant arabe non-conformiste Ibn Taymiyya (m. 1328)²⁹ et de ses disciples, tels qu’Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (m. 1350).³⁰ Abondamment nourri des idées de ces grands savants puritains et antisoufis, Birgivî Mehmed Efendi s’attaquait dans ses ouvrages, aux idées et aux pratiques soufiques, et il les accusait d’être des gens *bid’a* (*ehl-i bid’a*). Il rejoignait, uniquement sur le sujet de l’antisoufisme avec son grand rival Abū’l-Su’ūd Efendi, le majestueux *cheikh al-Islam* ottoman de l’époque.³¹

Une étude, même superficielle des fatwas d’Abū’l-Su’ūd Efendi reflète au premier regard, une mentalité ouvertement antisoufie se basant sur la conception de *bid’a* tout comme celle de son rival Birgivî Mehmed Efendi. A part ses fatwas ferventes concernant Oghlan cheikh Ismā’il-i Ma’shūqī et cheikh Muḥyī al-Dīn-i Qaramānī, il condamne également avec le même ton fervent, les pratiques et les rites des soufis. Par exemple, il exprime ses opinions à propos du *raqş ve deverân*, c’est-à-dire du *semâ*, de façon suivante:

28 Sur les Qadizâdelis voir par ex., Inalcık, *The Ottoman Empire* 184; et particulièrement Madeleine Zilfi, ‘The Kadizâdelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul’, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* xlv (1986) 251-269; id., *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age (1600-1800)* (Minneapolis 1988), Chapter 4.

29 Cf. Henri Laoust, EI, s.v. Ibn Taymiyya.

30 Cf. du même, EI, s.v. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya.

31 A propos des polémiques se déroulant entre Abū’l-Su’ūd Efendi et Birgivî Mehmed, voir EI, s.v. ‘Birgewi’; sur Abū’l-Su’ūd voir EI, s.v. ‘Abū’l-Su’ūd’.

'Ol qabâyihi 'ibadet qabilinden 'addedüb âyet-i kerîmeyi ana delil getürmekle tekrar kâfir olur, bu i'tiqaddan rüçû' itmezse qatilleri vâcib olur (....). Ammâ şimdiki zaman sûfleri iddikleri raks filhaqîqa kâfirlerin horos tepmesidür ve bunların fiilleri kefereye teşebbühdür. Ve Resûl aleyhisselâm hazretine raks isnâd etmek küfürdür. Zirâ raqş ef'âl-i süfehâdur (....)'.³²

C'est-à-dire, en résumé, d'après Abū'l-Su'ūd Efendi, le *raqş ve deverân* est la pratique des infidèles. Si les soufis croyaient que le *raqş ve deverân* était un rite religieux tout comme la prière journalière, ils deviendraient infidèles. Dans ce cas, il est nécessaire de les condamner à mort. Cette approche d'Abū'l-Su'ūd Efendi envers pratiques soufies symbolise en un certain sens la rigidité du point de vue de certains ulama othodoxes à propos des milieux soufis. Ces types de fatwa sont d'ailleurs un genre de documents rencontré à peu près à toute époque et à tout endroit dans le monde musulman, qui reflètent l'opinion officielle de la plupart des ulama orthodoxes.

A la même époque, ce fut le mouvement Malāmī, ayant un fort esprit messianique, se basant sur une conception de *quṭb* s'étant chargé à la fois d'une mission politique et religieuse,³³ influencée fortement de la doctrine de *waḥdat-i wujūd*, qui surgit dans l'Empire ottoman comme un mouvement social dans les basses classes. Implanté dans les territoires anatoliens et rouméliotes parmi les paysans et les petits commerçants, le mouvement Malāmī ne tarda pas à attirer par ses attitudes antigouvernementales, les réactions de l'Etat et des ulama orthodoxes.³⁴ A la suite des investigations policières strictement menées par le pouvoir politique, les cheiks Malāmīs ont été mis en observation, comme Būnyāmin-i Ayāshī, Pīr 'Alī-i Aqsarāyī, ou bien ils sont condamnés à mort ou décapité, tels que Ismā'īl-ı Ma'shūqī, Ḥamza Bālī et Ḥusām al-Dīn-i Anqaravī dont on a parlé ci-dessus.

Un groupe de manuscrits rédigés aux quinzième-dix-septième siècles par certains cheiks appartenant aux différents ordres mystique

³² Cf. Düzdağ, *Şeyhulislâm Ebussuud Efendi Fetvâları* 86.

³³ Cf. La'lizâde, *Sergodhesht*, fol. 137b-140a.

³⁴ Le mouvement Malāmī n'est pas encore étudié du point de vue de l'histoire sociale ottomane, alors qu'il jouie d'une importance considérable en Anatolie centrale au seizième siècle. Nous avons essayé de faire une petite étude du point de vue d'histoire sociale sur ce mouvement au seizième siècle [voir, Ocak, 'Les réactions socio-religieuses contre l'idéologie officielle ottomane et la question de *zendeqa ve ilhâd* au XVIe siècle', *Turcica* xxi-xxiii (1991) 71-82].

orthodoxes, nous démontrent, parallèlement au comportement du gouvernement ottoman et des ulama, que certains milieux soufis aussi ont entrepris une campagne anti-Malāmī durant une période assez longue. Nous pouvons en donner trois exemples dont le premier, rédigé par °Abd al-Laṭīf Qūdsī (m. 1452), intitulé *Kashf al-i'tiqād fī'l-radd °alā madhhab al-ilḥād*, a consacré un chapitre à la condamnation des Malāmīs.³⁵ Contrairement à son collègue Molla Ilāhī (m. 1491),³⁶ cheikh des Zaynīs à Bursa, °Abd al-Laṭīf Qudsī qualifie les Malāmīs comme des hérétiques et des athéistes (*ahl al-ilḥād wa'l-zandaqa wa'l-ib°ād*)³⁷ puisqu'ils suivaient, d'après lui, la voie des *ahl al-ibāḥa* en disant que les rites officiels de l'Islam ont été prescrits pour le peuple ignorant.

Pour le seizième siècle, nous pouvons donner deux exemples intéressant dont le premier, ayant pour titre *Ibṭāl-i rusūkhī* (ou *Taḍlīl al-ta°wīl*), est un opuscule rédigé en 1575, par un cheikh Khalwatī, Yūsuf Sinān Efendi. Dans cet opuscule où il qualifie les Malāmīs par le terme de *ghulāt-i mutaṣavvife* (soufis extrémistes), il les inculpe d'hérésie et d'athéisme.³⁸ Le deuxième opuscule, rédigé en 1614, intitulé *Risāla-i Mehmed °Amīqī* ou *Ayyūhā'l-walad (ô Mon Fils!)*, est l'ouvrage d'un certain Mehmed °Amīqī. Il emploie, à propos des Malāmīs, le terme de *ṭāyife-i malāḥida va firqa-i zanādiqa*, c.à.d. groupe des gens athéistes et hérétiques, et il fait des critiques sévères aux Malāmīs-Ḥamzavīs, particulièrement au sujet de *waḥdat-i wujūd* qui, d'après lui, a un grand rôle dans la dégénérescence des croyances du peuple ignorant.³⁹ Comme on le sait, ces deux derniers opuscules se trouvent cités autrefois très brièvement par Abdulpaki Gölpınarlı dans son célèbre ouvrage intitulé *Melâmîlik ve Melâmîler*.⁴⁰

Nous pouvons dire en conclusion, que l'opposition au soufisme dans l'Empire ottoman se manifeste essentiellement, dans une période allant du début jusqu'à la fin du seizième siècle, dans trois secteurs, sous différentes apparences: L'Opposition du gouvernement — si

³⁵ Cf. *Kashf al-i'tiqād*, ms. Bibl. Ulucami de Bursa, nr. 1497, fol. 281-283.

³⁶ Cf. Molla Ilāhī, *Meslek al-ṭālibīn*, ms. Süleymaniye (Fonds Mihrishāh) nr. 195, fol. 79a; du même, *Risāla-i aḥadiyya*, ms. Süleymaniye (Fonds Shehid °Ali Pasha), nr. 1390, fol. 101a.

³⁷ Cf. °Abd al-Laṭīf Qudsī, op. cit.

³⁸ Cf. *Ibṭāl-i rusūkhī*, ms. Süleymaniye (Fonds Es°ad Efendi), nr. 764/3, fol. 61a-65b.

³⁹ Cf. *Ayyūhā'l-walad*, ms. Süleymaniye (Fonds Hālet Efendi), nr. 3689/1, fol. 1b-5a.

⁴⁰ Voir Gölpınarlı, *Melâmîlik* 75,76,188.

l'on peut dire — visait certainement un but tout à fait politique que nous pouvons traduire par le souci d'empêcher le bouleversement de l'ordre social (*nizām-ı 'ālem*), et la perte de l'autorité gouvernementale, alors que celle des ulama de tendance puritaine, et celle d'une partie des milieux soufis visait empêcher également la dégénérescence morale et religieuse. Celle-ci, en partant d'une base tout à fait théologique, c'est-à-dire en partant de la conception de *bid'a*, tenait pour responsable les milieux soufis, de la dégénérescence de la société ottomane.

OPPOSITION TO SUFISM IN TWELVER SHIISM

NASROLLAH POURJAVADY

Sufism, the mystical dimension of Islam and esoteric tradition centered on sainthood (*wilāya*), has much in common with Shiism, particularly Twelver Shiism. Yet, Sufism developed basically as a form of Sunnism, whence it follows that the Shiites were opposed and at times even hostile to the Sufis. Twelver Shiism's opposition to Sufism goes back to the third/ninth century, during the so-called Lesser Occultation (*ghaybat-i ṣuḡhrā*) of the Twelfth Imam. It was at this time, during the life of al-Ḥusayn b. Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj (born c. 244/858, executed 309/922), that Shii opposition to the Sufis started with their enmity towards al-Ḥallāj himself. According to Shii tradition, al-Ḥallāj had been a Shiite,¹ but was expelled from Qum by the Imamite leaders² and was later denounced by Abū Sahl-i Nawbakhtī, the political head of the Imamites in Baghdad. Abū Sahl, who had two arguments with al-Ḥallāj,³ was the one "who denounced al-Ḥallāj to the Abbasid authorities as *mudda'ī al-rubūbiyya*"⁴ and thus contributed to his conviction and martyrdom.

Imamite scholars and writers have condemned al-Ḥallāj ever since. In the fourth/tenth century, the leader of the Twelver Shiites in Baghdad, Shaykh al-Mufid (d. 413/1022) mentioned al-Ḥallāj as a man known to have been a miscreant (*fāsiq*) and a heretic.⁵ Not only al-Ḥallāj, but in fact all Sufis, were denounced by Shaykh al-Mufid. He did so by quoting two of the Imams: °Alī al-Hādī, the tenth Imam (212-54/827-68), and °Alī al-Riḍā, the eighth Imam (148-203/765-818). The former, when asked about the Sufis replied: 'Whoever claims to be a Sufi is either an imposter or a misguided person, or he is naive.' The latter expressed even greater hostility towards the

¹ Louis Massignon, *The Passion of al-Hallaj*, transl. Herbert Mason (Princeton 1982) i, 322.

² Ibid. 324.

³ See A. Iqbāl, *Khāndān-i Nawbakhtī* (Teheran 1311) 114-6; *The Passion* i, 325, 322-9.

⁴ *The Passion* i, 325-7.

⁵ Shaykh al-Mufid, *Al-Masā'il al-ṣāghāniyya*, ed. Muḥammad Ghādī (Qum 1413 h.) 58.

Sufis, replying: 'Whoever hears the name of a Sufi and does not denounce him with words and in his heart, is not one of our followers. And whoever speaks out against the Sufis and denounces them, his behaviour is equivalent to combatting the infidels in the company of Muḥammad, the Prophet of God'.⁶

These sayings reflect the general attitude of the Twelver Shiites towards the Sufis after the time of Shaykh al-Mufid. Shii hostility towards the Sufis primarily had to do with the fact that the latter were Sunnis. Yet, when they criticized the Sufis, they often did so with arguments borrowed from anti-Sufi Sunni texts. In this regard the book entitled *Talbīs Iblīs* by Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200) is of pre-eminent importance. The work is the first lengthy vigorous attack against the Sufis which has come down to us, and it had an influence on all anti-Sufi writings produced thereafter, whether by Sunni or by Shii authors. One of the first Imāmī writers who criticized Sufism, not simply by quoting sayings from the Shii Imāms against them but by arguing against specific Sufi doctrines and practices, was Jamāl al-Dīn al-Murtaḍā al-Rāzī who lived in the first half of the sixth/twelfth century. Rāzī's book *Tabṣīrat al-ʿawāmm fī maʿrifat maqālāt al-anām*⁷ is concerned with describing, and to a great extent criticising, different religions and different Muslim sects.

In Chapters 16 and 17 of his book, Rāzī criticizes the sayings of the Sufi masters and condemns Sufism in general. The focus of his criticism in chapter 16 is the belief in unification (*ittiḥād*) and disregard of the sharia, i.e. antinomian acts and behaviour. He begins his condemnation by saying that 'the Sufis are Sunnis, and all the Sunnis consider them to be saints (*awliyāʾ*) and people of miraculous deeds, with the exception of Abū Ḥanīfa, al-Isfarāyīnī and the Muʿtazilites who deny miracles'.⁸ Rāzī then divides the Sufis into six different sects, which is reminiscent of Hujwīrī's division of the Sufis into twelve sects. But Hujwīrī, unlike Rāzī, is himself a Sufi and approves of nine out of the twelve sects. One sect he rejects because it completely discards Sufism, and the other two because they believe in incarnation (*ḥulūl*). Concerning these two sects Hujwīrī

⁶ Khwānsārī, *Rawḍat al-janān* (Teheran 1390 h.) i, 439-40.

⁷ We have used ʿAbbās Iqbāl's edition (Tehran 1313 sh.). Iqbāl questions the authorship of the work, and attributes it to Murtaḍā Ibn Dāʿi-i Ḥusaynī-i Rāzī. But as Shirwānī has convincingly argued in his introduction to *Nuzhat al-kirām wa-bustān al-ʿawāmm* (Teheran 1361 sh), the author is Jamāl al-Dīn al-Murtaḍā ʿAlī ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Rāzī.

⁸ Rāzī, *Tabṣīrat al-ʿawāmm* 122.

writes: 'Of those two reprobate sects which profess to belong to Sufism and make the Sufis partners in their error, one follows Abū Ḥulmān of Damascus... The other sect refers their doctrine to Fāris, who pretends to have derived it from Ḥusayn b. Maṣṣūr (al-Ḥallāj), but he is the only one of Ḥusayn's followers who holds such tenets'.⁹

Here, Hujwīrī attributes the doctrine of incarnation (*ḥulūl*) to one of the followers of al-Ḥallāj. Likewise, Rāzī holds al-Ḥallāj responsible for belief in *ittiḥād*, concerning which he writes: 'The first sect of the Sufis are those who believe in unification (*ittiḥād*), and the head of this sect is Ḥusayn b. Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj'.¹⁰ On these grounds Rāzī condemns not only al-Ḥallāj as a dualist (*zindīq*) and an infidel (*kāfir*), but other Sufis as well, notably Abū Yazīd al-Baṣṭāmī and Abū Bakr al-Shiblī.

The second sect of the Sufis, according to Rāzī, consists of the so-called "lovers" (*ushshāq*). They believe that one should be concerned with nothing but God, because only God is worthy of man's love. However, this is not what the prophets, including Muḥammad, taught men to do. The prophets stressed man's obligation to fulfill the religious duties God has imposed on him.

The third sect is called the *Nūriyya*. The followers of this sect, according to Rāzī, believe that two kinds of veils, one made of light (*nūr*) and one of fire (*nār*), exist between man and God. Persons who are veiled by fire are followers of Satan and perpetrate Satanic acts. Their veil is said to be of fire because Satan himself was created from fire. Persons who are veiled by light acquire praiseworthy qualities such as trust in God (*tawakkul*), longing for God (*shawq*) and resignation (*taslīm*), etc. None the less, Rāzī criticizes these Sufis for their resignation and for believing that man should worship God not out of longing for Paradise or fear of Hell-fire, but out of sheer love for God. He notes that if this were the correct attitude, in his prayers the Prophet Muḥammad would not have asked for Paradise nor sought refuge in God from Hell-fire.

The fourth sect, called the *Wāṣiliyya*, claims to have attained the state of union (*wiṣāl*) with God and thus to have become *wāṣil*. Since *wiṣāl* is the final goal of a Sufi, the *Wāṣiliyya* believe that they no longer need to observe religious duties. They now have no obligation to perform the prayers or fast or pay the *zakāt* or to make the pil-

⁹ 'Alī-i Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-maḥjūb*, transl. R.A. Nicholson (London 1976, first published 1911) 260.

¹⁰ Rāzī, op. cit. 122.

grimage to Mecca. They can even commit immoral acts such as adultery and sodomy, without causing any impairment to their lofty state.

The fifth sect, Rāzī continues, consists of those who believe it is forbidden for a man of God to read books and study different (religious) sciences, because knowledge of God is attained through discipline and self-denial which can only be gained directly through a spiritual master and not from books and theoretical studies.

The sixth and last sect of the Sufis is made up of those who care for nothing but sensual pleasures, such as eating, dancing and wearing nice clothes without observing the laws of the sharia.

All these groups of Sufis, according to Rāzī, are reprobates and condemned by the Shiites. They are innovators and have deviated from the right path which, as Rāzī believes, is nothing other than Imāmī Shiism.

The title of chapter 17, 'On some of the sayings al-Qushayrī mentions in his book', indicates that the author intends to examine some of the claims made by the fifth/tenth century Sufi writer Abū'l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1074) in his *Risāla*, a handbook on Sufism. Al-Qushayrī, a student of the Ash'arite theologian Ibn Fūrak, was one of the most influential Sufi masters and writers, and tried to incorporate Ash'arite theology into Sufism. Rāzī attacks the Sufis for listening to music and dancing (*samā'*). According to him this is a practice which is not sanctioned by the sharia. Mostly, however, he attacks the Sufis from a theological point of view, and condemns them for holding beliefs which they share with the orthodox Sunni Muslims.

Sufis, he states, believe in incarnation; their saints claim to have reached union with God. They also believe that once they have reached this state, whatever they may do, their action is God's action and not their own action. In this connection Rāzī refers to the saying of Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī (d. 320/932) quoted by al-Qushayrī: 'Pharaoh claimed to be God outwardly, but the Mu'tazilites maintain this same claim inwardly when they say that the servant of God has no action'. Rāzī observes that this saying of al-Wāsiṭī is sheer determinism, and considers it to be obviously false.

What seems to have concerned Rāzī particularly is the concept of sainthood (*wilāya*) which al-Qushayrī and other classical Sufi writers attribute to the great Sufis of the past such as Ibrāhīm b. Adham, Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī, Ma'rūf al-Karkhī, Sarī al-Saqatī, al-Junayd, Abū Yazīd al-Baṣṭāmī and Sahl al-Tustarī. Sufis, according to Rāzī, believe that they are the best of God's creation, after the prophets

and God's Messenger, or even superior to the latter since they can see God not only in Paradise but even in this world. By attacking the Sufi concept of *wilāya*, Rāzī is defending the superior status of prophets, in particular that of Muḥammad, the Prophet of Islam. As a Shiite, he also wants implicitly to reject the claim that any human being besides the Prophet can be more sanctified than the Shii Imāms.

In this connection, Rāzī attacks the claim that Sufi saints are capable of performing miracles. He points out that Sufi writers, such as al-Qushayrī, attribute miracles to their saints, for example to al-Ḥallāj, but blame the Shiites for attributing miracles to their Imāms.¹¹ Yet, after the prophet Muḥammad performing miracles was the prerogative of the Shii Imāms. The miraculous deeds that have been reported about al-Ḥallāj or other Sufis were nothing but sorcery (*sihr*).

Thus, in accordance with Shii belief, Rāzī refused to accept that Sufis had the power to perform miracles. This position was common among Shii writers and none of them would accept the claim that any person, other than their Imāms, could perform miracles. Consequently, whenever Imāmī writers such as ʿAbd al-Jalīl al-Qazwīnī, in his *Kitāb al-naqd*¹² (written around 560/1165) refer to alleged miracles performed by Sufis, they do so in the context of anti-Sufi polemics. Al-Qazwīnī, for example, refers to the miracles of al-Ḥallāj and Rābiʿa al-ʿAdawiyya as part of an argument against an opponent who attacked the Shiites for claiming that the Imām had miraculously turned the image of a lion on a cushion into a real lion. Al-Qazwīnī, like Rāzī, held that no Sufis could perform a miracle, since they did not possess *wilāya* (sainthood). After the Prophet *wilāya* was the exclusive prerogative of the Imāms. In fact, Shii writers such as al-Qazwīnī and Rāzī hated the Sufis for having claimed that anyone could be endowed with sainthood. This violent hatred, as Massignon points out, 'is particularly significant considering that they have no hatred for the Muʿtazilites who are hostile to their Imams'. By means of explanation he adds: 'What the Imamites reproach al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Sufyān al-Thawrī, al-Ḥallāj, and al-Jīlānī for, is having shown the Sunnites that sanctity (whatever the accepted definition was) was not an *aristocratic privilege* reserved to

¹¹ Ibid. 138.

¹² ʿAbd al-Jalīl-i Qazwīnī-i Rāzī, *Kitāb al-naqd*, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn-i Urmawī *maʿrūf bi-Muḥaddith* (Teheran 1358 sh.) 70.

Alid descendants, but a divine grace that freely chooses its elect'.¹³

Rāzī's attacks against Sufism illustrate the general hostility felt by the Twelver Shiites towards the Sufis up to the Mongol invasion of Iran and the fall of the Baghdad caliphate in the middle of the seventh/thirteenth century. Although many other Shii ulama and writers expressed hostility towards Sufism in the period thereafter and up to the present, it should be observed that the relationship between the Shiites and the Sufis definitely went through a change from the eighth/fourteenth century onwards. Instead of sheer hostility, some Shiites developed an ambivalent attitude *vis-à-vis* Sufism. This gradual change occurred during the Il-Khanid and the Timurid periods, and continued in the Safavid period.

This change is the result of the efforts of a number of Shii thinkers and writers to incorporate Sufi ideas, especially the doctrine of Ibn ʿArabi (d. 638/1240) into Shii theology and philosophy. One of these thinkers is Sayyid Ḥaydar-i Āmulī (b. 720/1320) who, in his *Jāmiʿ al-asrār*, calls the Sufis 'those among the men of God who have realized the truth', and considers their doctrines to be the same as those of the Twelver Shiites.¹⁴

Āmulī approves of Sufism and tries to demonstrate that its inner dimension is identical with Shiism. None the less, he is critical of a number of particular sects of the Sufis. Just as there are different groups that call themselves Shiites, such as the Ghulāt, the Ismāʿīlīs and the Zaydīs, one finds different groups and sects under the label 'Sufi', even the Ibāḥiyya (antinomians) and the Ḥulūliyya (believers in incarnation). Just as only one group from among those who call themselves Shiites is on the right path and deserves the name 'Shiite', only one sect of the Sufis is on the right path and the rest are not really Sufis.¹⁵ Unlike Rāzī and other Shiites, Āmulī approves of certain early Sufis such as al-Junayd, Sarī al-Saqatī, Maʿrūf al-Karkhī, and Abū Yazīd al-Bastāmī, all of whom are presented as having been disciples of the Imāms. Among the later Sufi shayks, Āmulī mentions Saʿd al-Dīn Ḥamūya, a disciple of Najm al-Dīn al-Kubrā who was a Shiite Sufi and believed that there were only twelve *awliyāʾ* and that the last of them was the *Ṣāhib al-zamān*, the Mahdī.¹⁶ Āmulī also singles out as respectable figures Ṣadr al-Dīn

¹³ *The Passion* i, 329.

¹⁴ Ḥaydar Āmulī, *La philosophie shiʿite (Jāmiʿ al-asrār)*. Textes publiés par Henry Corbin et Osman Yahia (Teheran 1969) 3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 47-8.

¹⁶ See ʿAzīz-i Nasafi, *Le livre de l'homme parfait*, ed. M. Molé (Teheran 1962) 320-3.

al-Qūnawī, the disciple of Ibn ʿArabī,¹⁷ and the latter's commentators Dāwūd al-Qaysarī and ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī. However, he disapproved of the 'Sufis of his own day and age'.¹⁸

Āmulī's *Jāmiʿ al-asrār* is an excellent example of *rapprochement* between Shii philosophy and Sufi doctrines that were expounded by Ibn ʿArabī and his commentators. His positive attitude towards the well-known early Sufis and towards Ibn ʿArabī and his followers is typical of Shii theosophists in the subsequent period. They tried to incorporate Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine, which they called *ʿirfān*, into Shii theology.

After Āmulī, the Shii ulama, as far as their opposition towards the Sufis goes, were divided into two groups. One group consisted of those who were exclusively specialized in Law and who were against Sufism and the Sufis. They considered the existence of the Sufi orders, their practices, and the master-disciple relationship to be an unlawful innovation, and condemned both the early and the later Sufi shaykhs. In their criticism of Sufism and their attacks on the Sufis they followed the author of the *Tabṣīrat al-ʿawāmm*.

The second group of Shii ulama were those who believed in the theoretical aspect of Sufism, particularly in the teachings of Ibn ʿArabī, which they called *ʿirfān* and *ḥikmat-i mutaʿāliya* whereas they objected to Sufi practices, the institution of the *khānaqāh*, and the organisational structure of the Sufi orders. When it came to individual Sufis, these ulama, themselves *ʿāriḍ*s or teachers of *ʿirfān* and *ḥikmat*, accepted the early Sufis (usually with the exception of al-Ḥallāj) as well as Ibn ʿArabī and Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī and his students and followers, but they condemned the Sufi masters of their own time who belonged to a particular order, even those who belonged to a Shii order, such as the Niʿmatullāhiyya or Dhahabiyya.¹⁹

An interesting Shii writer who belonged to the second group of ulama was Qāḍī Nūrullāh-i Shūshtarī (executed 1016/1607), the author of the *Majālis al-muʾminīn*. He is known for having included many Sufis in his list of Shii historical personalities. Shūshtarī believed that Abū Yazīd al-Bastāmī, al-Junayd, Sahl al-Tustarī, were true Sufis and were in fact Shiites, though they might have appeared otherwise.²⁰ This belief made him sympathetic towards all the im-

17 Āmulī, op. cit. 431.

18 Ibid. 614.

19 On these orders, see Richard Gramlich, *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persien*, iii vols (Wiesbaden 1965-81).

20 Nūrullāh-i Shūshtarī, *Majālis al-muʾminīn* (Teheran 1375-6 h.) i, 5.

portant Sufis of the past. However, he denounced the strictly Sunni Sufis of his time, notably the Naqshbandīs, and showed hostility towards them.

Another author and thinker who belonged to the second group of Shii ulama was Ṣadr al-Dīn-i Shīrāzī, better known as Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1051/1641). Mullā Ṣadrā integrated the Sufism of Ibn ʿArabī and the Ishrāqī philosophy of al-Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl into his theosophical system. Like Ḥaydar-i Āmulī, he was sympathetic towards classical Sufis and respected them.²¹ However, he criticized al-Ḥallāj for his ecstatic utterance *ana'l-ḥaqq*, and maintained that al-Ḥallāj's visions were neither confirmed by reason, nor by Divine Law.²² Conversely, Mullā Ṣadrā was apologetic with regard to Abū Yazīd al-Bastāmī and his extreme ecstatic statements. He explained such statements by adopting the position that Abū Yazīd was in fact speaking on behalf of God at the moment he uttered them.²³ It is towards the end of his book that Mullā Ṣadrā mentions the Sufis of his time and condemns them for their practices: i.e. their gatherings involving eating and drinking, playing music and dancing, instead of discussions, teaching and listening to philosophical ideas, moral advice, and mystical doctrines.²⁴

The attitudes of the Shii theosophists (*ʿurafāʾ*) or philosophers (*ḥukamāʾ*) towards Sufism, exemplified here by Ḥaydar-i Āmulī and Mullā Ṣadrā, have remained almost the same ever since. Although the followers of Mullā Ṣadrā, the teachers of Transcendental Philosophy (*ḥikmat-i mutaʿāliya*), have accepted theoretical aspects of Sufism and have shown tolerance towards the Sufis, they have avoided the name *ṣūfī*. Even at present the word *ʿirfān* (gnosis) is used in preference to *taṣawwuf* to avoid negative connotations.

The other group of Shii ulama, the specialists in Law (*fuqahāʾ*), followed Rāzī and showed relentless hostility towards Sufism throughout the Safavid period and afterwards as well. When Shiism became the established religion of Iran under the Safavid dynasty, opposition against Sufism expressed by the Shii ulama became a real threat to Sufis. Several books and treatises were written by Shii writers to condemn Sufism as a heretical sect. All these works drew

²¹ Ṣadr al-Dīn-i Shīrāzī, *Kaṣr al-aṣṇām al-jāhiliyya*, ed. M.T. Dānishpazhūh (Teheran 1340 sh.) 72.

²² Ibid. 9, 29.

²³ Ibid. 29.

²⁴ Ibid. 128. For a study dealing with ecstatic utterances (*shaṭhiyyāt*), see Carl W. Ernst, *Words of Ecstasy in Sufism* (Albany 1985).

on, and sometimes developed, Rāzī's arguments in the *Tabṣirat al-ʿawāmm*. The most notable example of this category of works written during the Safavid period is the *Ḥadīqat al-shīʿa*, attributed to Aḥmad b. Muḥammad-i Ardabīlī, better known as Muqaddas-i Ardabīlī (d. 993/1585).²⁵ In this book, all Sufis are condemned as Sunnis and by implication are considered to be opposed to the Shii Imāms. The Imāms themselves, according to the author of the *Ḥadīqat al-shīʿa*, had been opposed to the Sufis. For this reason Ardabīlī feels perfectly justified in denouncing all Sufis, not only al-Ḥallāj and al-Baṣṭāmī, but Rūmī, and his master Shams-i Tabrizī, Ibn ʿArabī, Azīz al-Dīn-i Nasafī, ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī, and others as well.

Ardabīlī's text is of considerable significance in the history of Shii opposition towards Sufism. It served the Niʿmatullāhī author Muḥammad Maʿṣūm ʿAlī Shāh-i Shīrāzī as his point of departure in his defence of Sufism. In his *Ṭarāʾiq al-ḥaqāʾiq* he concentrates primarily on the accusations made in the *Ḥadīqat al-shīʿa*.²⁶ This does not mean that he is unaware of other anti-Sufi works. In fact, he mentions eight other authors who took up critical positions *vis-à-vis* Sufism,²⁷ one of them being Mullā Ṣadrā.

Another author mentioned by Maʿṣūm ʿAlī Shāh is Muḥammad Ṭāhīr-i Qummī (d. 1098/1687), a *faqīh* who wrote under the influence of Rāzī's *Tabṣira*. His two anti-Sufi works are entitled the *Risālat al-fawāʾid al-dīniyya fī'l-radd ʿalā'l-ḥukamāʾ wa'l-ṣūfiyya* and *Tuḥfat al-akhyār*. In the latter work, Qummī often quotes from Rāzī's *Tabṣira*. Like Rāzī, he condemns all Sufis including al-Qūnawī, Rūmī and Ibn ʿArabī, whom he considers to be followers of al-Ḥallāj and Abū Yazīd al-Baṣṭāmī. He refers to Ibn ʿArabī as a fool and a misguided fellow whose belief in the Unity of Existence (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) is equivalent to infidelity (*kufr*) and atheism (*zandaqa*).²⁸

The last ʿālim who wrote against Sufism to be mentioned by Maʿṣūm ʿAlī Shāh is Āqā Muḥammad ʿAlī-i Bihbihānī (1141-

²⁵ The text was first published in Teheran in 1343/1964. For discussions on the text's authenticity and dating, see Kathryn Babayan, 'Sufis, Dervishes and Mullahs: the Controversy over Spiritual and Temporal Dominion in Seventeenth-Century Iran', *Pembroke Papers* iv (1996) 117-38, note 37.

²⁶ Maʿṣūm ʿAlī Shāh (Muḥammad Maʿṣūm-i Shīrāzī), *Ṭarāʾiq al-ḥaqāʾiq*, ed. Muḥammad Jaʿfar-i Mahjūb (Teheran 1335 sh.) i, 186 ff.

²⁷ Ibid. i, 174-86.

²⁸ Muḥammad Ṭāhīr-i Qummī, *Tuḥfat al-akhyār* (Qum 1393 h.) i, 59-61, 164-69.

1216/1732-1801), the *mujtahid* from Kirmānshāh. Bihbihānī is famous for having persecuted the Niʿamatullāhī Sufis who were actually a Shii sect, and for having put to death some of their leaders. In his treatise entitled *Risāla-i khayrātiyya*, Bihbihānī fiercely attacks all Sufis, some of whom he had even personally condemned to death.

In 1958, about 160 years after Bihbihānī's death, his biographer ʿAlī-i Dawānī wrote about this *mujtahid*'s hostility towards the Sufis. He tried to justify Bihbihānī's anti-Sufi writings and his actions against the Niʿamatullāhī Sufis. In the biography, Dawānī summarized the position of his protagonist by stating: 'All the Sufi sects are false and the Sufis are all misguided and have strayed from the right path and Sufism is quite different from Islam and it is especially opposed to Shiism'.²⁹ This statement reflects the feeling of many contemporary Shii ulama towards the Sufis. Their negative feeling, however, is not shared by the ulama who have integrated Sufi thought into their theological views as *ʿirfān*. At present adherents and opponents of Sufism would appear to be evenly balanced in Iran, which explains why Sufis, generally speaking, did not suffer serious harassment after the Iranian revolution.

²⁹ ʿAlī-i Dawānī, *Waḥid-i Bihbihānī* (Qum 1337 sh.) 385.

ANTI-SUFISM IN QAJAR IRAN

MANGOL BAYAT

Qajar Iran witnessed the advent of an era of religious renewal and socio-political rethinking. Official Shii Islam was dominated by the *mutjahids*, high ranking ulama specialists of the sharia who enforced the law ruthlessly and waged war against the 'religious deviators'. The latter comprised, broadly speaking, the Sufis ('*urafā*') and the philosophical theologians (*hukamā*'), in all their respective diversity, and, by the mid-nineteenth century, the religious reformers/modernizers. In this paper, I shall argue that, paradoxically, the *hukamā*' opposed the Sufis no less than the *mutjahids* did, and that both the *hukamā*' and the Sufis, in turn, were subjected to a devastating assault on the part of the modernizers. By the late Qajar period, Aḥmad-i Kasrawī emerged as the most virulent critic of Sufism, ushering in the new faith in modern science and, in the process, finalizing the desacralization of the concept of knowledge.

To a large extent, Qajar religious policies followed closely those of the Safavids. It is thus important for us to review here, briefly, the circumstances that brought the latter¹ to power and facilitated the emergence of Shiism as the state religion of Iran. Prior to the Safavid period, the *de facto* separation of temporal power from divine authority, a necessary consequence of the doctrine of *ghaybat*, freed Shii thinkers from lasting loyalty to any political entity, and allowed them the opportunity to develop several dynamic schools of theology and philosophical-theology. One must bear in mind the historic fact that the doctrine of the Imamate was fully elaborated to its last formative stage in the ninth and tenth centuries, at the time when Islamic rational thought in general was exposed to and integrating aspects of Greek philosophy. The Shii Imamate was nurtured by Neo-platonic concepts then prevalent in esotericist and rationalist circles, a development parallel to al-Fārābī's own idea of the philo-

¹ For greater details on my interpretation of Safavid and Qajar religious policies, see Mangol Bayat, *Mysticism and Dissent: Socio-Religious Thought in Qajar Iran* (Syracuse 1982) and sources cited there.

sopher-king. The Imam is viewed as the sole source of legitimate authority, whether he actually rules or not. He has access to divine truth, and only he can extract from the religious texts their esoteric meaning. *Ta'wīl* is the exclusive prerogative of the infallible Imam; and only he has the power of intercession. In his person he combines the attributes of the philosophers' First Intellect, and the Sufis' Perfect Man. Thus, Shiism, even more so than Sunnism, condemned the philosophers and, more vigorously, the Sufis, who claimed spiritual authority in guiding the faithful through the path of spiritual initiation to knowledge of the divine. In an effort to restrain religious extremism and alleged fraudulent claims, Shii leaders concerned with *fiqh* gradually came to impose the supremacy of the law, as their Sunni counterparts had. This was finally achieved in the early sixteenth century when the Safavids established their dynastic power in a reunified Iran.

Shah Ismā'īl had come to power at the head of an extremist messianic Sufi movement that supported his claims to divine right to rule, the like of which mainstream Shii ulama had until then relentlessly denounced as heretical. However, they chose to back the Safavid monarch, who had invited them to settle in Iran and had bestowed social status and privileges upon them as the religious leaders of the newly founded state religion. They viewed him as a holy warrior for the right religion and true faith. Though they upheld the Shii doctrine of the Imamate as the sole source of authority, in practice they accepted the shah's rule, provided it was in conformity with the holy law, while simultaneously demanding that the faithful obey and serve him. They made no attempt to redefine the nature and function of the state in times of *ghaybat*; nor did they deal with the ever increasing and vexing discrepancy between the doctrinal ideal and the historical reality. However, in Imāmī Shiism as in Sunni Islam, temporal power became a necessity for the preservation and good functioning of the Islamic law, an integral part of the Islamic social order.

Some ulama stayed aloof and shunned cooperation with the state. Others were directly associated. Mullā Taqī-i Majlisī and his son Mullā Bāqir-i Majlisī were close advisers and high religious officials appointed by the state. The father reportedly was Sufi-inclined; but it was Majlisī-son who laid the basis for the Shii *fuqahā'*'s claim to supreme religious authority, making them alone, and not individual believers themselves, answerable to the Imam, thus enforcing their directives upon the masses. Although this provided the ulama with a potential source of power in political affairs, they did not challenge

temporal authority. There is no evidence in the historical annals or in their writings that they desired or aimed at temporal authority. They viewed themselves as legal custodians and religious leaders. Institutionalized Shii Islam produced an official hierarchy of clerical leadership, headed by the *mujtahids* (highest ranking expert of the law), with the doctrine of the Imamate increasingly acquiring an eschatological character.

Shii *fuqahā*⁹ devoted their studies to aspects of theological dialectics, jurisprudence and *ḥadīth*, the chains of transmission of authentic Imāmī traditions. These legal experts came to form the bulk of the religious establishment, and stressed the primacy of the holy law. They continued to enforce the belief that the Imam's opinion constitutes the sole source of the law, and that only he can instruct the believers about the religious duties God has imposed on them in order for them to attain reward in this life and the next. In his absence his opinion must be discovered with absolute certainty before the legal pronouncements are made. Once this opinion is determined, it becomes an authoritative source of the law. Authority, then, lies not in the person who reveals the Imam's opinion, but in the opinion itself. Nonetheless, the *mujtahid* who practices *ijtihād*, the endeavor to determine the Imam's opinion, acquires authority, though not supreme. *Ikhtilāf* over non-fundamentals among the *mujtahids* was allowed; none could lay claim to infallibility.

In certain circles the practice of *ijtihād* was severely contested in the Safavid period. It was viewed as incompatible with the doctrine of the Imam's authority, a mere 'conjecturing' on the part of the *mujtahids* who resort to analogical reasoning like their Sunni counterparts. Both Sufis and theological-philosophers insisted that individual believers are directly answerable to the Imam. But they were often powerless in defending their position in public, as bitter controversies divided the ranks of Imāmī Shiism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Mullā Ṣadrā (1572-1641), the most brilliant theological-philosopher, had to leave Isfahan and seek refuge in a remote village to pursue his work. His followers and like-minded thinkers formed small, private, exclusive circles for the initiated, outwardly abiding by the *fuqahā*'s ruling. It was Sufism that presented the greatest challenge, successful as it was in its mass appeal at both the popular and elite levels. Refusing to acknowledge the *mujtahids* as the sole exponents of Shii Islam, denying them the right to represent the collective voice of religious conscience, the Sufi leaders offered their followers a spiritual alternative to the *fuqahā*'s legalistic institutionalized religion. The last reigning Safavid shah

had turned his energy and devotion to his circle of Sufi adepts.

In the late eighteenth century, prior to the Qajar's ascent to the Peacock throne, the *fuqahā'* waged their fiercest and bloodiest battle against the 'deviators'. The *Uṣūlī-Akhbārī* controversy is too often viewed as a religious controversy involving 'rationalist' ulama fighting against irrational 'traditionists', who resisted the emergence of a 'rational' centralized 'church'.² In fact, by that time the Sufis and the theological-philosophers had conceded to the *fuqahā'* their important role as legal custodians of the religious community, recognizing the social need for law enforcement and directives. But they also demanded for themselves the right to explore the mystical or philosophical dimensions of Imāmī Shiism. The Shii '*urafā'*' and *ḥukamā'*' shared in common the conception of a specially gifted individual, endowed with a semi-divine qualification to unveil, in an evolutionary fashion, the esoteric meaning of the holy texts. They differentiated 'true knowledge' of the divine from jurisprudence, philology or grammar, claiming it was accessible only to the 'initiated'. The *fuqahā'* condemned these claims as blasphemy, since it was tantamount to sharing with the Imam the divine function of *ta'wīl*. But doctrinal disputes were not the only reason behind the *Uṣūlī mujtahids'* merciless persecution of their detractors, which led to scenes of violence and bloodshed in the streets of Najaf, Karbalā' and the major cities of Iran. The *mujtahids* Bihbahānī, father and son, whose policies led to the *Uṣūlīs'* triumph and who were referred to as *ṣūfikush* (Sufi killer) in the Qajar annals, were determined to impose their absolute religious authority in society. Their notorious use of coercive means to consolidate their power forced the dissidents to practice *taqiyya*, the time-honored Imāmī Shii self-protecting concealment of beliefs, deemed necessary in case of threat to one's life. Many nineteenth-century Sufi masters expressed their reliance on the Shii dictum: '*taqiyya* is part of the faith', attributed to the sixth Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 765).

The Qajars (1785-1925) rose to power at the time when the *Uṣūlī fuqahā'* had successfully consolidated their authority in society by asserting the predominance of *fiqh* over and against the mystical and philosophical dimension of Shii Islam. Like their predecessors, Qajar

² On the controversy, and for further references, see Etan Kohlberg, 'Aspects of Akhbari Thought in the Seventeenth and Eighteen Centuries', in Nehemia Levtzion and John Voll (eds.), *Eighteenth-Century Renewal and Reform in Islam* (Syracuse 1987) 133-160. See also note 12 of the contribution by Pierre-Jean Luizard to the present volume.

fuqahā' persecuted the *'urafā'* and the *ḥukamā'* relentlessly. Religious disputes periodically led to civil strife and often degenerated into street fights. Despite this extreme intolerance, Sufism and theological-philosophical discourse, in all their respective diversity, continued to flourish, competing with one another, and developing lively debates on the merit and legitimacy of their views. Paradoxically, and despite their heavy borrowing from the Sufis' spiritual system of thought, Shii *ḥukamā'* proved to be as intolerant as the *fuqahā'* in their attacks on the *'urafā'*. Mullā Ṣadrā's followers and, more importantly, new schools of Shii thought, expressed a distaste for the Sufis' populism and discard of reason. But their denunciation of Sufi practices and beliefs reflected also their desire to achieve orthodox respectability and to deter charges of heresy against themselves.

When the Akhbārīs suffered final defeat at the hands of the Uṣūlī *mujtahids* around the turn of the nineteenth century, the struggle was taken over by the Shaykhī school of theology.³ Its founder, Shaykh Aḥmad-i Aḥsā'ī (d. 1826), carried on the anti-*ijtihād* argument and, in the process, developed a new concept of religious leadership. He scorned the Uṣūlīs' 'limited' knowledge of jurisprudence and their narrow 'legalistic approach' to religious studies. He rejected the *mujtahids*' frequent resort to conjecture to find evidence of proof in theological debates. Greatly influenced by Shii theological-philosophy and mysticism, Aḥsā'ī offered the model of the Perfect Shiite as the ideal human proof of the Imam, the latter's agent among the believers, and the gate to divine knowledge. The Perfect Shiite was conceived as an elaborate variation of the Sufis' mystico-messianic Perfect Man, blending in aspects of the neo-Platonic Islamic philosophers' concept of the First Intellect or Philosopher-King. In fact, Aḥsā'ī and his successors, Kāẓim-i Rashtī (d. 1843) and Muḥammad Karīm Khān-i Kirmānī (d. 1871), proposed a blending of philosophical enquiry and mystical initiation as an alternative method for the understanding of the holy texts and the Imam's teachings. In contrast to the Uṣūlīs' conception of collective but decentralized religious authority based on expertise in jurisprudence, the Shaykhīs' Perfect Shiite stressed the absolute authority of a single spiritual leader, possessor of knowledge of the divine.

Like the Sufis, the Shaykhīs refused to acknowledge the Uṣūlīs' supreme authority in religious affairs, though recognizing their all-important functions as legal custodians and moral-religious guides of

³ On the Shaykhīs, see Bayat, op.cit., chapters 2, 3, and sources cited there.

the commoners. They reserved for themselves the exclusive privilege of enlightening the elite, the intellectually gifted worthy of initiation to higher levels of knowledge of the divine. And here, they showered their contempt on popular Sufism, dismissing it as irrational emotionalism concerned with rituals, verging on heretical worshiping of human leaders. The Shaykhīs were, indeed, involved in more intellectual issues of allegorical interpretation of Shii doctrines. They rejected the conception of knowledge as already given in its entirety, with nothing more to add to it until the advent of the expected Imam's return. They proposed a more humanist vision of the world in perpetual progressive evolution toward spiritual perfection, and a more positive faith in the ability of human beings to perfect themselves. But their Perfect Shiite was no different than the Sufis' master-guide. In fact both conceptions shared the same attributes of quasi-millenarian, semi-divine, spiritual leader of the age, which the *fuqahā*⁷ vehemently condemned as blasphemous. With all their philosophical borrowing the Shaykhīs, in the last analysis, were as mystically oriented as the Sufis, simply by virtue of the nature and characteristics of their Perfect Shiite, and thus, equally subjected to charges of heresy. The *fuqahā*'s hostility was less directed against the Shaykhīs' views, if taught in small, exclusive and private circles, as was the case, than against their challenge to the Uṣūlīs' predominance over religious institutions and their authority in socio-cultural affairs. *Takfīr* rarely affected the life and work of Shaykhī leaders, except in terms of periodic forced social isolation. It was only when theological disputes also implied political differences, that the *fuqahā*⁷ turned belligerent. Persecution of thought occurred when its practical consequences clashed with the institutional authority and social influence of the Uṣūlī-dominated Shii hierarchy.

The Qajar dynastic power acted as arbiter, carefully maintaining a balance between all. Working in close collaboration with the *mujtahids* of their choice, the shah, the royal governors in the provinces, and the ruling elite in general would also favor some Sufi master and/or a particular school of theological philosophy, depending on individual inclination and social expediency. The Shaykhīs were highly popular in Qajar circles, especially among the earlier Qajar monarchs and princes. A semblance of religio-cultural equilibrium was maintained at the official level, even though strained at times. In the late nineteenth century, the most serious rebellion against Sufism and semi-Sufi Shaykhism, as well as theological philosophy, occurred with the emergence of a new type of Iranian intellectual.

Although the concept of the Perfect Man or Perfect Shiite represented a concrete symbol of human creative power at its highest degree of self-realization, it did not project a truly humanist faith in the ability of humans to achieve progress through their own means rather than by an external transcendental force. Such an anthropocentrism was achieved from within an imamocentric system. Religious disputes did not concern the social life of the ordinary believer; nor did they offer a new dimension in understanding socio-political problems based on concrete practical experiences of daily life. Instead, they reinforced traditional Shii political alienation, while upholding the elitist conception of knowledge as the possession of the chosen few. Raised within this cultural climate, the new intellectuals strove to disengage rational thought from theology, theological-philosophy and mysticism. They were committed to the belief that social and political problems were the central issues of life, and only through the adoption of the 'new learning' (i.e. modern European) could their society liberate itself from prevailing ignorance and archaic views. They were strongly convinced that the principal causes for foreign intervention in domestic affairs, loss of national sovereignty and cultural decline were political tyranny and religious dogmatism. The ruling elite, these thinkers argued, favored widespread ignorance and nurtured popular religious beliefs verging on superstition, fearing as they did free rational thought, which they were determined to exclude from their realm. The intellectuals professed themselves to be the new 'torchbearers', here to awaken the masses from their slumber and tear apart the protective 'shield' their masters had built around them.

Faṭḥ-alī-i Ākhundzāda (1812-1878), °Abd al-Raḥīm-i Ṭālibzāda (1834-1911), Mīrzā Āqā Khān-i Kirmānī (1853-1896), Jamāl al-Dīn-i Asadābādī, known as "Afghānī" (1838-1897), to name only a few, formed the first generation of Iranian intellectuals in transition between the old and the new. Their writings bear the mark of classical Islamic philosophy and mysticism, especially the more contemporary Shii school of Shaykhism. Like their predecessors, they stressed the Muslims' need for a guide, the sage, the 'renewer of the age', some man 'of high intelligence and pure soul', who would help the community of faithful find the right path of science. Asadābādī is known for his so-called pan-Islamism only, but he was mostly a social critic, a polemicist, who found in classical Islamic philosophy the rhetoric and rationale for his virulent attack on the *fuqahā'* and their understanding of religion imposed on the masses as a 'heavy yoke'. More importantly he attacked both the *ḥukamā'* and the

'*urafā*' of his time for turning their attention from the real issues of the age, the plight of the Muslims' poverty and social oppression, and the need to call for social reforms. He accused both groups of remaining indifferent to the 'real sciences' that produce railways, telegraphs, medical instruments, and the like. Science now rules the world, he wrote, and Europe possesses it and, thus, is the master of the world. Islamic philosophy and mysticism no longer meet the demands of the modern world, he asserted. Muslims must change their instructors and leaders. The Perfect Man or the Perfect Shiite is he who is well-versed in modern sciences, and not the theologian or the philosopher-mystic.⁴

Asadābādī and his generation of intellectuals were still rooted in their religio-cultural environment; they argued their position in an inconsistent, often illogical and self-contradictory way. Nonetheless, they universalized the concept of '*ilm*', laying the ground for the final unequivocal secularization of knowledge. The following generation was by far bolder, more emancipated from their traditional culture, though not yet fully enough modernized to lose their innocent faith in modern science. Aḥmad-i Kasrawī (1890-1946), one of the outstanding figures of this generation, belonged to the Qajar period by temperament and intellectual genealogy, achieving what Asadābādī began, the desacralization of knowledge. Born in a small village near Tabriz and raised to become a mullah, he ended up joining the ranks of a small but highly active circle of late Qajar intellectuals who shaped the secular nationalist ideology of twentieth-century Iran. An eye-witness of the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1909, he was a product of the radical social and cultural transformation of late Qajar Iran.

This revolution marked the initial phase of the modernization process, involving its direct agents, the intelligentsia; its willing partners, the religious dissidents; and their respective unwitting assistants from among the members of the traditionally conservative temporal and religious centers of power. It engineered the triumph of secularism in the social policies of subsequent governments. The poets, the men of letters, the new intellectuals, as a result of the vital role they played and the national fame they acquired at that time, were able to ensure the predominance of their view over that of the

⁴ Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn-i Asadābādī, known as 'al-Afghānī', *Maqālāt-i Jamālīyya* (Teheran 1933). See also Nikki R. Keddie, *Islamic Response to Imperialism: Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamal al-Din "al-Afghani"* (Berkeley 1969).

mujtahids, thus displacing the latter in public opinion.⁵ Kasrawī, however, unlike his predecessors and some of his contemporaries, was given the opportunity to translate his social ideas and principles into practical policies.

By 1920, he came to hold important positions in the ministry of justice, first in Zanjān and Qazwīn, then in Khūzistān. He quickly acquired a reputation as an incorruptible civil servant, a formidable foe of the anti-constitutionalist elements still prevalent in the country. He was, indeed, determined to enforce the judicial reforms that sharply drew the demarcation line separating the realm of the *sharīʿat* (holy law) from that of the *qānūn* (the constitution), severely limiting the jurisdiction of the religious courts in all matters other than those pertaining to the religious and personal life of the citizen. The widespread corruption and arbitrariness he personally witnessed in the provincial court procedures, and the fierce obstacles he encountered in the persons of the lay and religious elite that still controlled the province, fueled his zeal to combat the traditional power structure and the socio-religious culture it rested upon.⁶ He played a vital role in the late Qajar/early Pahlavi period of nation-state formation, bearing the banner of the constitutionalists.

Kasrawī was a firm believer in God the Creator, in the immortality of the soul, which, he insisted, was distinct from the body. Human intellect, he also asserted, is separate from the grey matter that constitutes the brain. Kasrawī adamantly refuted all schools of materialist thinking. He spent time and energy denouncing Darwinism, which attracted educated Iranians' interest. He deplored its social implications and its godlessness. Such 'bad teachings', he believed, could only lead people astray, to their destruction, to war, to subjugation of nations by other nations, and to a 'return to the state of savagery' following a thousand years of civilization.⁷ Man is not an animal, he argued; he is the chosen creature of God, entrusted with the world created for him to develop.⁸ But Kasrawī was not willing to dismiss totally Darwin's scientific accomplishments; he could not, given his own equally great faith in and defense of science. Thus, he chose to deliberately misunderstand Darwin, claiming that the latter

⁵ See Mangol Bayat, *Iran's First Revolution: Shi'ism and the Constitutional Revolution, 1905-1909* (Oxford 1991). For a different interpretation see Vanessa Martin, *Islam and Modernism: The Iranian Revolution of 1906* (Syracuse 1989).

⁶ *Hujjat Allāh-i Aṣil, Sirrī dar andishahā-i Kasrawī* (Teheran 1977).

⁷ *Dar pīrāmūn-i rawān* (Teheran n.d.) 45.

⁸ *Ibid.* 23.

had acknowledged the 'hand of God' in the evolutionary process of human development out of their animal origins. Only his atheist followers, he stressed, have failed to note this point.⁹ Such confused and inconsistent arguments echo earlier Qajar intellectuals' desperate attempts to reconcile modern scientific theories with traditional Shii theological-philosophical views, with no more success. Kasrawī was, indeed, generally critical of any European achievement based on what he termed 'religious vacuum'. Materialism, he wrote, is the product of irreligiosity, and is the cause of socio-economic and political evil-doings in Europe. Human societies need religion, for secular laws cannot fill in the void created by the eradication of religion. Good deeds depend not on law but on honor, and honor is generated by religious morality. Irreligious people may refrain from doing evil out of fear of retribution; religious people do it out of conviction.¹⁰

Here, one must note two important characteristics in Kasrawī's thought: his belief in the universality of moral values, and his conception of religion as a means rather than as an end in itself. God has created human beings in His image; they are born good, with an innate ability to distinguish good from evil. However, human development and human civilization cannot occur without religion. Religion shows the way; it is the torch that brings to light the Truth. And Truth has to be, indeed is, attained only through Reason.¹¹ And Reason is in perpetual search for Truth, which Kasrawī identifies with knowledge, *dānish*. Qajar intellectuals had desacralized the concept of knowledge, using the Persian term *dānish*, distinguishing the sacred from the profane. Wishing to remain consistent with his basic argument, Kasrawī insisted that both were compatible and mutually supportive. Religion, he wrote, is the language of the celestial (*sipihr*); its goal is to broaden people's perspective and enlighten them with new views, showing the way to peaceful co-existence. Knowledge, on the other hand, seeks to create means to facilitate human life by discovering the unknown and revealing the law of nature (using the same Persian word *sipihr*). Thus, he concluded, although the bases of *dīn* and *dānish* differ, both follow an identical direction.¹²

⁹ Ibid. 82-83.

¹⁰ *Ā'in* (Teheran 1933) 25-28.

¹¹ *Dar pīrāmūn-i khīrad* (Teheran 1957) 27.

¹² *Dar pīrāmūn-i rawān* 49-50.

Kasrawī admitted openly that he held a utilitarian conception of religion. 'We want religion solely for the purpose of improving [human] life'.¹³ *Dīn*, he assured his public, is no less valid than *dānish*; nay, it is superior. 'Those who value *dānish* because it is based on evidence, must accept that our discussion here is also based on evidence'.¹⁴ Kasrawī is equally critical of philosophy, which he distinguishes from *dānish*. Whereas *dānish* is based on scientific experiments and research, he stated, philosophy rests on beliefs and not on proofs and evidence. Philosophy, thus lacks certainty, lacks absolute truth.¹⁵ Similarly, Kasrawī's utilitarian approach to religion led him to refute the validity of the Islamic reformism then current in the Muslim world. A return to the 'original Islam', he claimed, is not possible; no religion can be reformed. 'Life progresses, and religion must follow this progress'.¹⁶ Like anything else in life, religion is subjected to the exigencies of time. Later in his life, he had contemplated the creation of a new religion, referred to as *pākdīn* (pure religion), but we know little about it.

Kasrawī viewed religion as a strong bond that formed the basis of national unity. The existence of numerous diverse schools of Sufism, Shiism and other sects was thus tantamount to religious pluralism. And religious pluralism, he argued, is the major cause for social conflicts and national disunity. Lumping together Shiism, Ismailism, Sufism, Babism, Bahaism, he lamented that the real meaning of Islam was destroyed by centuries of abusive religious leadership and sectarianism. In consequence, the masses of pious believers were misguided and kept ignorant. Kasrawī's polemics were at their most virulent when he came to denounce Sufism, which he held responsible for 'polluting and distorting' the pure Islam of the Prophet. His wrath had no limits when he discussed the social and cultural ill effects of Persian mysticism in all its variation. Sufism, he would proclaim again and again, proved to be the poison that destroyed not only Islam but also Muslim culture.

While he conceived of human beings as the chosen creatures of God, endowed with intellect and innate moral virtues, and thus created superior to animals, on the other hand, Kasrawī denied them any divine attribute. He repudiated the Sufi doctrine of 'unity of

¹³ Ibid. 53.

¹⁴ Ibid. 50.

¹⁵ Ibid. 112.

¹⁶ *Dar pīrāmūn-i Islām* (Teheran 1969) 95.

existence' (*waḥdat-i wujūd*), the sole doctrine Kasrawī dealt with in his anti-Sufi essays. Ḥallāj, he wrote, was beguiled by the Sufi doctrine, and he 'lightheartedly' lay 'childish and dubious' claim to divinity; he lost his life in the process.¹⁷ Except in this instance, Kasrawī chose to discuss the socio-political negative implications of Sufism, not paying attention to its details and diversity at both the popular mass appeal and literary levels. He explained that Sufism distracted the attention of Iranian people at times of 'national' crisis. Thus, the Mongol invasion of Iran in the thirteenth century led to the rapid development and spread of Sufi orders throughout the country. Rather than inciting them to revolt and chase the invaders out of their land, Sufi leaders encouraged the population to adopt an attitude of 'irresponsible passive otherworldliness', and leave their fate in the hands of the enemy. Iranians were left leaderless.¹⁸ Sufism flourished, while political chaos and social disarray prevailed. A hierarchical, centralized Sufi authority was formed, resting on powerful networks reaching out to all corners of the land. Its leaders traced the genealogy of its ancestry to a Prophet's companion, and they argued that the Prophet himself had called for the formation of two distinct sources for holy teaching: the *sharīʿat* for the masses, and the *ṭarīqat* for the select few. These are lies, Kasrawī decried. Lies and forgeries are their speciality. Their God has nothing to do with Islam's God.¹⁹

Kasrawī's criticism of classical Persian mystical poetry was no less virulent. Again, consistent with his utilitarian conception of religion, he declared that poetry must contain 'useful substance', 'conversing about worthy things', about life's 'necessities'. Poetry is no 'song of the angels', nor 'celestial inspiration'. Poets are neither Prophets, nor Saints, nor Sages. Nor are they servants of kings and princes.²⁰ ʿUmar Khayyām, he claimed, recognized neither God nor the divine Creation, and he shared with the Sufis a negative attitude toward work.²¹ Saʿdī failed to mention even once the plight of the masses following the Mongol invasion. Mawlawī, whose *Mathnawī* displays the 'bad teachings' of Sufism, has 'brainwashed' millions of people, with destructive consequences.²² Ḥāfiz, likewise, distilled his

17 Ibid. 4.

18 *Şūfigarī* 22-24; see also *Dar pīrāmūn-i adabīyyāt* (Teheran 1944), 54-55.

19 *Şūfigarī* 46-47, 73.

20 *Dar pīrāmūn-i adabīyyāt* 20.

21 Ibid. 44-52.

22 Ibid. 61-66.

'poison' through his poems, which were, broadly speaking, meaningless or just plain nonsensical.²³ Those 'national poets', Kasrawī asserted, lived unaware of the world that existed beyond their own four walls, unaware of the true meaning of civilization, ethics, religion, politics, education.²⁴ Persian poets generally represented everything Kasrawī, the late Qajar positivist and social activist, rejected, the opposite of everything he believed in: human progress, individual responsibility for one's action, ability to act upon rather than just react to life, commitment to social causes, faith in reason and science. He wrote, 'History teaches us, ... and we know, that the Creator has willed that the world move forward continually ...; and we know that the future of the world shall be better and more glorious than its past'.²⁵

While readily recognizing Europe's cultural, scientific and technological progress, Kasrawī deplored its 'imperialist design' of keeping the East and its peoples in a perpetual state of backwardness, where they would sink deeper and deeper into a state of ignorance. The Europeans, he stated, devoting their talents, their energies, even their lives, to promoting their own national grandeur and power, have contributed immensely to universal knowledge. Yet they wish to prevent the peoples of the East from achieving similarly lofty goals; these peoples must be deprived of progress and development. Kasrawī depicted European Orientalists as agents in charge of implementing their governments' imperialist schemes. He 'accused' E.G. Brown and other Orientalists of responsibility for the glorification of classical poetry and Sufism. He mocked their efforts to present the Sufis as profound thinkers constantly in search of Truth, when, he alleged, they knew very well that Sufism is nothing but sloth, superstition, and disinterest in this world. He dismissed their research and translations as part of this grand conspiracy put into action with the support of Iranian collaborators, who were instructed to define Iranian civilization solely on the basis of its past literary 'so-called achievements'. Kasrawī expressed his concern that, implicit in such glorification of Sufism and mystical poetry lay the traitors' admission that Iran is incapable of realizing in any other way its potential abilities and power vis-à-vis Europe. 'I was certain', he wrote, 'that these Orientalists who claimed to be friends

²³ Ibid. 67-68.

²⁴ Ibid. 115.

²⁵ Cited on the back cover of *Dar pīrāmūn-i rawān*.

of Iran, in fact, wished Iranians only misfortunes, and they collaborated with the Iranian traitors'.²⁶ Their sole purpose, he went on, was to show the world that 'the Iranian culture is nothing but poetry and should [aim] at nothing else'.²⁷

Kasrawī's vitriolic polemics denouncing Sufism displayed his own erroneous views and false evaluation of its literary accomplishments. His detractors from among both the older traditionally oriented and the younger modernist generations never failed to point out his mistakes and challenge his defective knowledge. He himself often confessed he was not entirely familiar with classical poetry; nor did he hide the fact that his understanding of European thought was incomplete. And yet, paradoxically, the impact of his opinions on his contemporaries was immense, by far outweighing that of the more learned spokesmen for traditional Persian culture or the better qualified modern scientists. As already stated, Kasrawī's legacy can best be assessed only from within the broader socio-political context of his time. Unlike Ākhundzāda, al-Afghānī or Mīrzā Āqā Khān-i Kirmānī, he was one generation removed from the epoch of national self-definition. His intellectual predecessors' self-appointed mission was to formulate, articulate in verse, prose and polemics, their vision of the new Iran, demolishing the old image in the process. Kasrawī's task was concretely to implement their ideals and the laws enacted by the Constitutional Revolution, of which he was one of the most famous children and chroniclers.

In the period covering World War One and its aftermath, up to 1925, when the Qajars were dethroned and the Pahlavi regime was installed, the relative weakness of the central government created an astonishingly free environment for men like Kasrawī to express their views publicly. By 1920-21, the national mood among the young and not so young, among the social activists and the mere passive participants in the tremendous changes Iran was then undergoing, reflected a youthful, boisterous optimism and faith in the validity and feasibility of the modernization process set in motion at the turn of the century. Modernism meant, first and foremost, a rejection of traditional social institutions and inherited cultural norms. It meant the ideals of the European Enlightenment, which had so inspired ideologically diverse individuals who participated, directly or indirectly, in the Constitutional Revolution. Kasrawī spoke the

²⁶ *Dar pīrāmūn-i adabīyyāt* 119.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 124.

language of modernity and of the European Enlightenment, as best he could understand it. Within this universe of discourse, his understanding of Sufism necessarily implied its denunciation.

LES COURANTS ANTI-CONFRÉRIQUES DANS LE SUD-EST
EUROPÉEN À L'ÉPOQUE POST-OTTOMANE (1918-1990)
LES CAS DE LA YOUGOSLAVIE ET DE L'ALBANIE

NATHALIE CLAYER & ALEXANDRE POPOVIC

Les Balkans, ou plus largement le Sud-Est européen, ont vu, avec la conquête ottomane, la formation de communautés musulmanes importantes sur les territoires que recouvrent aujourd'hui la Hongrie, la Roumanie, l'ex-Yougoslavie, la Bulgarie, l'Albanie et la Grèce. Tout au long de la domination ottomane, l'islam balkanique dans toutes ses composantes — soufies et non soufies — fit partie intégrante de l'islam ottoman, même si des caractéristiques locales, plus ou moins prononcées, ont pu voir le jour ici et là à diverses périodes. Les ulémas venaient souvent parachever leurs études dans les grands centres de l'Empire (Istanbul, Edirne, Bursa, ou dans les provinces arabes); ils faisaient partie de la hiérarchie de l'*ilmiyye* mise en place par les autorités ottomanes. Les cheikhs des provinces balkaniques allaient eux aussi parfaire leur initiation mystique auprès de grands maîtres de la capitale ou d'autres grands centres; leurs établissements appartenaient à des réseaux confrériques dépassant le cadre de la Péninsule. Par conséquent, il serait logique de croire qu'à cette époque, les mouvements d'opposition au soufisme — qui n'ont pas encore été étudiés en tant que tels — ont été, dans les Balkans, du même type que ceux que l'on connaît dans le reste de l'Empire et en particulier à Istanbul. C'est ainsi qu'il faut placer la poursuite du mouvement des Hamzevis au seizième siècle en Bosnie dans le cadre plus large de la lutte contre le soufisme de tendance *malāmatī* des Melamis-Bayramis existant également dans d'autres régions de l'Empire.¹ On retrouve aussi vraisemblablement, à Sarajevo et ailleurs, les répercussions du mouvement des Kadizadelis, né dans la capitale dans la première moitié du dix-septième siècle.²

¹ Cf. EI, s.v. *Malāmatīyya*, partie 'Turquie ottomane'.

² En ce qui concerne la ville de Sarajevo dans la seconde moitié du dix-huitième siècle, voir les exemples mentionnés dans la chronique de Bašeski (Mula Mustafa Ševki Bašeskija, *Ljetopis (1746-1804)*, traduction, introduction et commentaires par Mehmed Mujezinović (Sarajevo 1968).

La dislocation de l'Empire ottoman et la création d'Etats-nations apportèrent bien entendu des changements profonds dans la Péninsule balkanique. Des modifications importantes se produisirent non seulement sur le plan politique, mais aussi dans la carte ethnique et religieuse de la région. Les musulmans, devenus (sauf dans le cas de l'Albanie et, dans une certaine mesure, dans celui de la Bosnie-Herzégovine) citoyens de second rang, émigrèrent en grand nombre soit volontairement, soit sous la contrainte. Ainsi, dans la partie orientale et méridionale de la Péninsule, c'est-à-dire en Roumanie, en Bulgarie et en Grèce, la population musulmane diminua considérablement. En revanche dans la partie occidentale, à savoir dans les territoires yougoslaves et albanais, des groupes de musulmans beaucoup plus compacts subsistèrent.

Au cours du vingtième siècle, la situation politique, économique, sociale et religieuse ayant varié d'un État à l'autre, les diverses communautés musulmanes, qu'elles soient restées importantes ou non, ont connu des évolutions fort diverses. Si l'on veut examiner les courants anti-soufis, ou anti-confrériques, il faut donc considérer séparément le phénomène dans chacun des pays de la région. Pour ce qui est de la Roumanie, de la Grèce et de la Bulgarie, où les *tarikats*, principal vecteur de l'islam soufi, furent considérablement affaiblies par rapport à l'époque ottomane, on sait extrêmement peu de choses sur les éventuelles oppositions auxquelles elles auraient eu à faire face, à l'image des attaques dont avait fait l'objet le cheikh nakshbandi de Tutrakan (en Dobroudja roumaine) en 1922.³ Par conséquent, nous examinerons ici, séparément, seuls les cas de la Yougoslavie et de l'Albanie à l'époque post-ottomane, ou plus exactement à partir des années 1918-1920. Deux cas, qui, on le verra, présentent des disparités tout à fait notables.

Au sein des territoires yougoslaves, c'est également une situation très contrastée qui existait — et qui existe encore — entre, d'un côté, la Bosnie-Herzégovine et, de l'autre, le Kosovo et la Macédoine. Sur le plan ethnique d'abord: les musulmans de Bosnie-Herzégovine

³ Cf. Mehmed Emin Manav, 'Tutrakan'da cema'at-i islamiyye ve şeyhlik meseleleri', *Romania*, 2ème année, n°218 (Bazargiç, 23 septembre 1922) 1; ainsi que la réponse du cheikh Edhem Eşref, 'Dervişlik hakkında bir kaç söz', *Romania*, 2ème année, no 291 (Bazargiç, 20 février 1923) 1; et no 292 (22 février 1923) 1.

sont slaves alors que la communauté musulmane de Kosovo et de Macédoine se compose en majorité de musulmans albanais, auxquels s'ajoutent des musulmans turcs et slaves. Mais aussi sur le plan historique: en 1918, la Bosnie-Herzégovine vient de connaître quarante ans d'occupation austro-hongroise, alors que les régions méridionales s'émancipent à peine de l'Empire ottoman. Quant à la situation des courants soufis, dès la création de la Yougoslavie, elle fut tout à fait différente dans le nord et dans le sud du pays. De fait, en Bosnie-Herzégovine, les confréries semblent être sorties de la période austro-hongroise déjà très affaiblies,⁴ tandis qu'en Macédoine et au Kosovo, même si le départ d'une partie de la population musulmane — notamment les élites — avait entraîné la fermeture de certains établissements confrériques, les réseaux des *tarikats* restaient relativement développés.

Ces disparités expliquent l'attitude nuancée des représentants de l'islam "orthodoxe" envers les *tarikats*, selon qu'ils appartiennent à l'une ou l'autre des régions en question et selon qu'ils considèrent les courants soufis de l'une ou de l'autre de ces régions. En outre, leur attitude a été influencée par le contexte politique. C'est pourquoi il faut distinguer deux grandes périodes: celle du Royaume de Yougoslavie, puis celle de la Yougoslavie communiste.

Dans la Yougoslavie d'entre les deux guerres mondiales, les leaders de la Communauté musulmane officielle — largement dominée par les ulémas de Bosnie-Herzégovine — s'attaquèrent aux *tarikats* surtout dans cette dernière région, par le biais de mesures concrètes.

En effet, dès la fin de la première guerre mondiale, certains représentants religieux craignant l'influence des confréries auraient tout fait afin d'empêcher celles-ci de continuer à jouer leur rôle auprès de la population, en les privant de leurs biens de main-morte, en destituant certains cheikhs, ou encore en essayant de transformer des *tekke* pour d'autres usages.⁵ Preuves de cette opposition, qui se traduisit par la cessation de l'activité de plusieurs établissements

⁴ On sait peu de choses sur le processus de cet affaiblissement, car il n'y a pas encore eu de véritables recherches sur ce sujet. Cependant, on a tendance, en général, à considérer que l'islam confrérique a toujours été faible en Bosnie-Herzégovine, ce qui est loin d'être prouvé, bien au contraire !

⁵ Cf. Ufak, 'Pitanje sarajevskih tekija i derviša', *Muslimanska Svijest* i/6 (Sarajevo, 9 avril 1936) 5.

confrériques en Bosnie-Herzégovine, sont les réactions parues dans la presse musulmane. Celles-ci venaient des milieux soufis de Sarajevo, ou de leur sympathisants, qui tentaient vainement de mettre en valeur la place des confréries dans la vie des musulmans de la région, et de dénoncer la politique anti-soufie des plus hautes autorités de la Communauté musulmane officielle. Ainsi, en janvier 1931, Riza Muderizović publiait-il dans un journal de Sarajevo une série d'articles intitulée 'Šta su to derviši' (Qu'est-ce que les derviches?), rappelant l'histoire et le rôle des *tarikats* dans le monde musulman, et en particulier en Bosnie-Herzégovine.⁶ De même, dans un annuaire paru en 1932, on insistait sur le fait que, parmi les cheikhs et les derviches de Sarajevo, il y avait eu des gens savants, des poètes, des calligraphes, dont la renommée avait largement dépassé les frontières de la Bosnie. Mais on y dénonçait aussi les récentes décisions des autorités musulmanes du pays:

'Au cours de la réunion des représentants de la Communauté religieuse musulmane de l'été dernier [1931], qui s'est tenue à Sarajevo, à l'invitation de la Direction suprême (Vrhovno Starješinstvo), il a été notamment question de la fermeture des *tekke* dans notre pays. Leur bâtiments et leurs biens-*vakf* seraient mis à la disposition des musulmans pour d'autres usages religieux et culturels. D'après certaines décisions, qui ont été édictées par la direction des *vakf* ces derniers temps à Sarajevo, la fermeture des *tekke* a déjà commencé progressivement ici. Il n'est donc pas superflu, étant donné que bientôt à Sarajevo disparaîtront les quelques *tekke* qui subsistent encore, de décrire ici brièvement la naissance et le développement des *tekke* de Sarajevo'.⁷

Beaucoup d'autres réactions parurent de même tout au long des années trente, comme à propos du *tekke* mevlevi de Sarajevo — dont la famille des cheikhs était sommée par la Direction des *vakf* de quitter celui-ci⁸ —, à propos de la fermeture des *tekke* de Bistrigi, d'Ali Paša et de Gazi Husrevbeg,⁹ ou encore à propos des efforts de la Direction des *vakf* pour stopper l'activité du *tekke* kadiri de Sinan

⁶ Cf. Riza Muderizović, 'Šta su to derviši', *Jugoslovenska Pošta* (article publié en feuilleton: Sarajevo, 5-21 janvier 1931).

⁷ Anonyme, 'Tekije u Sarajevu', *Narodno Jedinstvo, Ilustrovani zvanični Almanah — Kalendar Drinske Banovine*, iii, Sarajevo 1932, 366-369; 366.

⁸ Son cheikh, Šejh Fikri, ne touchait déjà plus son salaire depuis 1924, c'est-à-dire depuis la mort de son père (cf. Ismet A. Tabaković, 'Da li će se ukinuti Mevlevijska tekija?', *Jutarnji glas* i/41 (Sarajevo, 17 février 1933) 3; et Fikrija Šehović, 'Još o Mevlevijskoj tekiji', *Jutarnji glas* i/44 (Sarajevo, 21 février 1933) 3).

⁹ Cf. Ufak, op. cit.

Aga (Sinanova Tekija), tout d'abord en voulant le transformer en un musée de la culture islamique, puis en imaginant de couper la *semahane* en deux, pour en faire un *mekteb*.¹⁰ L'un des articles illustrant le mieux la "guerre" menée par les représentants de l'islam "orthodoxe" contre les confréries à cette époque est certainement celui du cheikh Nezir Berberović — fils du dernier cheikh de la Hanikah de Gazi Husrevbeg, Hafiz Hamdi Efendija (1888-1934) —, paru en 1938, alors que des changements survenus en 1936 à la tête de la Communauté musulmane officielle avaient laissé espérer, en vain, pour les milieux soufis, une amélioration de leur sort:

'*Qui donc est plus injuste que ceux qui ont empêché que, dans les mosquées d'Allah, Son nom soit invoqué, et qui se sont évertués à détruire [ces mosquées]?* (Coran ii, 114). Ce verset me vient toujours à l'esprit quand je pense qu'il y a chez nous des représentants religieux (*hodža*) qui s'efforcent, chez nous en Bosnie-Herzégovine, de supprimer toute trace des derviches et de la vie des derviches, en dépit du fait que les derviches sont précisément les plus obéissants serviteurs du Très Haut, et en dépit du fait que ce sont justement les derviches qui ont le plus œuvré pour le passage à l'islam de ces régions. Leurs mérites dans ce domaine sont grands, mais ceux dont ce serait le devoir de le faire ne veulent pas le reconnaître. Ils sont remplis de haine envers nous tous, ils cherchent à nous nuire, et c'est à eux que ce rapporte le verset cité ci-dessus.

Nombre de nos fondateurs de *vakf* ont laissé une grande part de leurs biens afin de fonder et d'entretenir grâce à ceux-ci un *tekke* de derviches. Ainsi a fait l'immortel fondateur de Sarajevo, Gazi Husrevbeg, ordonnant que, à côté de sa mosquée, outre la *medrese* où seraient enseignées les sciences profanes et religieuses nécessaires aux *hodža*, soit fondée également une *hanikah*-école pour les cheikhs des derviches, et à cet effet, de ses biens propres, il a laissé expressément d'importantes sommes. Jusqu'après l'occupation [austro-hongroise de 1878-1918], la Hanikah est restée ouverte; on y a cultivé les sciences, notamment les sciences des derviches, la philosophie mystique, sans laquelle il n'y a pas de compréhension correcte de beaucoup de choses qui sont liées à l'islam. De la Hanikah — grâce à la grande intelligence de Gazi Husrevbeg — sont sortis de nombreux cheikhs savants qui ont ensuite répandus l'islam à

¹⁰ Cf. H., 'Hoće li vakuf uništiti Hadži Sinanaginu tekiju u Sarajevu', *Muslimanska Svijest* iii/53 (Sarajevo, 31 octobre 1938) 3. De nombreux autres articles dans lesquels les milieux soufis réagissaient parurent dans la presse musulmane de l'époque. Parmi eux, on peut citer: Anonyme, 'Revolucija Sarajevskih derviša', *Jutro* i/4 (Sarajevo, 13 mars 1934) 5-6; Nezir Berberović, 'Tekije i njihova svrha', *Islamski svijet* iii/114 (Sarajevo, 16 octobre 1934) 8; A. Karadžović, 'Dajte nam Hanikah', *Islamski Svijet* iii/126 (Sarajevo, 25 janvier 1935); A. Karadžović, 'Zašto šuti Ulema-medžlis u Sarajevu?', *Islamski Svijet* iii/132 (Sarajevo, 8 mars 1935); Ibni Adem [A. Karadžović], 'Derviši', *Islamski Glas* ii/16, (Sarajevo, 17 janvier 1936) 2; Anonyme, 'Zikirullah', *Islamski Glas* ii/26 (Sarajevo, 10 avril 1936) 7-8.

travers la Bosnie-Herzégovine et qui ont été célèbres en tant que savants et hommes pieux. Mais les *hodža* “profanes” — probablement envieux du succès de la Hanikah et ne voulant pas reconnaître que la science des derviches (*ilmi tesavvuf*) aussi contribue à répandre et à consolider l’islam — ont cherché à supprimer cette école de derviches, grande œuvre de Gazi Husrevbeg. Ils sont arrivés à leurs fins de la façon suivante: d’abord, en plaçant des *hodža* [à la place des cheikhs] à la tête de la Hanikah, puis en ôtant au cheikh et aux derviches leurs droits et leurs traitements qui étaient prescrits dans la *vakfija* [acte de fondation], et enfin en interdisant à la population musulmane d’assister au rituel (*mukabela*).

La seule chose qui soit restée jusqu’à aujourd’hui est que, la veille du vendredi ou certains autres jours, on rassemble dans une salle les élèves des petites classes de la *medrese* de Gazi Husrevbeg pour qu’ils fassent un semblant de *zîkr* [“da malo prohukću”] sous la conduite d’un *hodža*. C’est tout ce qui a subsisté de la Hanikah. Il est clair qu’il s’agit d’une atteinte évidente au *vakfname*, et que tout musulman a le droit de demander au juge de la Chariat d’obliger la direction du *vakf* de Gazi Husrevbeg de respecter le *vakfname*. Au temps de la précédente direction de nos institutions religieuses [donc avant 1936], en particulier du Ulema-medžlis où siégeaient [alors] des ennemis jurés des derviches, qui ont détruits deux ou trois *tekke* à Sarajevo, les derviches de la ville ont adressé une pétition au *mütevelli* du *vakf* de Gazi Husrevbeg, demandant que la Hanikah de Gazi Husrevbeg soit de nouveau rétablie telle que l’exige la *vakfija*. Le *mütevelli* a laissé [le règlement de] l’affaire au Ulema-medžlis. Nous n’avons pas reçu de réponse, alors que ce sont justement les derviches de Sarajevo qui avaient mené la plus forte propagande pour que l’équipe imposée de force à la direction des *vakf* soit destituée, demandant qu’à sa place viennent des gens ayant la confiance de la population. L’étonnement a été d’autant plus grand chez les derviches de Sarajevo, lorsqu’ils ont reçu de la part du nouvel Ulema-medžlis, après le changement de ses membres, la décision faisant suite à leur pétition adressée à l’ancien Ulema-medžlis, décision dans laquelle il est dit qu’il n’est pas possible d’exaucer cette requête car le bâtiment de la Hanikah est détruit et que, d’ailleurs, l’on enseigne la *mukabela* aux élèves de la *medrese*. Il a été écrit à juste titre dans ce journal qu’il ne s’agit pas là d’une réponse. [Car] si Gazi Husrevbeg avait voulu que l’on enseigne la *mukabela* aux élèves [de la *medrese*], il l’aurait ordonné et il n’aurait pas fondé une école à part pour les derviches et les cheikhs, dans laquelle on doit cultiver, outre les autres sciences, la mystique (*tesavvuf*) et dans laquelle doivent se préparer les missionnaires de l’islam. Une telle décision de l’Ulema-medžlis nous a tous beaucoup étonné étant donné que c’est nous, les derviches, qui avons lutté le plus en faveur du changement de la situation dans notre direction religieuse et que nous nous attendions [donc] que la nouvelle direction montrerait moins d’inimitié envers nous et nos institutions que ne le faisait la précédente. Mais voilà, nous nous sommes trompés. Les *tekke* de Isabeg à Bendbaša, de Skenderpaša, celui de Šejh Bistrigi, et le *tekke rufai* de Nadkovačima ont été fermés; et on écrit même [maintenant] que la Commission [des *vakf*] veut fermer et faire disparaître le célèbre *tekke* de Šejh Sinanaga dans le quartier des Sagrdžije et y ouvrir un *mekteb*. Nous voyons maintenant qu’à cet égard les nouveaux hommes dans la direction religieuse (Ulema-medžlis) ne diffèrent pas beaucoup des anciens, et nous le

regrettons et cela nous blesse.

En ce qui concerne la Hanikah, les derviches de Sarajevo vont se tourner vers les tribunaux afin d'y demander le respect de l'acte de fondation de Gazi Husrevbeg. Et moi, l'humble, je mets en garde tous ceux qui détruisent les lieux de culte dans lesquels on vénère le nom d'Allah et dans lesquels on éduque des gens qui aiment leur religion, conformément au verset mentionné ci-dessus, qui les menace du châtimeut le plus grand'.¹¹

Cette action contre les *tarikats*, particulièrement sensible en Bosnie-Herzégovine où l'affaiblissement des confréries était facilitée du fait de leur situation déjà précaire, fut appuyée par un discours, à la fois "pratique" et "théorique". L'une des premières attaques parues dans la presse d'après guerre, est celle de Jusuf-Zija Smailagić dans un article publié en 1924 au sujet de la situation culturelle des musulmans de Serbie du Sud:

'Il est intéressant [de noter] qu'autrefois les gens riches ouvraient et dotaient par de riches fondations, non pas des *medrese* et des écoles, [mais] de quelconques *tekke*, repères de la paresse, dans la plupart des cas [en faveur] de la *tarikats* des Bektachis. C'est ainsi par exemple qu'encore aujourd'hui la propriété du *tekke* bektachi de Tetovo pourrait faire vivre un internat de 200 élèves, si celle-ci était mise en valeur au lieu d'être dilapidée par les *mütevelli*'.¹²

Mais c'est à partir du début des années trente que l'organe de la Communauté musulmane officielle se fit l'écho de l'attitude des milieux musulmans "orthodoxes" vis-à-vis des *tarikats*. On y apprend d'abord que, le 11 juillet 1931, lors d'une réunion, les autorités de la Communauté musulmane de Yougoslavie abordèrent la question des confréries¹³ et décidèrent des mesures à prendre: les *tekke* devraient désormais être utilisés à des fins religieuses et éducatives; ceux qui ne respectaient pas les normes de la Chariat devraient être fermés, et leurs biens saisis pour des actions religieuses et éducatives; les autres établissements confrériques devraient être placés sous un contrôle strict, "afin que les autorités de l'Etat aient confiance en eux"; les cheikhs devraient être empêchés d'exercer lorsqu'ils ne respectent pas les normes de l'islam; enfin, les deux Ulema-medžlis devraient fournir des renseignements, concernant leur région, sur les cheikhs,

¹¹ Nezir Berberović, 'Sarajevske tekije i muslimanske vjerske vlasti', *Muslimanska Svijest* iii/54 (Sarajevo, 23 novembre 1938) 2.

¹² Jusuf-Zija Smailagić, 'Kulturno stanje muslimana u Južnoj Srbiji', *Gajret* (Sarajevo) viii/14 (1924), 221.

¹³ Les autorités musulmanes constataient notamment que les *tekke* étaient nombreux dans la partie sud du pays (c'est-à-dire au Kosovo et en Macédoine), alors que leur nombre était insignifiant dans la zone de juridiction du Ulema-medžlis de Sarajevo.

les *tekke* et leurs biens, et émettre des règlements précisant, notamment, que les biens des *tekke* sont les biens de la Communauté musulmane, que chaque établissement doit avoir une mission religieuse et éducative, et fixant quelles sont les *tarikats* qui peuvent être acceptées, ainsi que les qualifications requises pour être cheikh — ces règlements devant être soumis à l'Autorité suprême pour acceptation.¹⁴

De fait, en 1934, l'Ulema-medžlis de Skoplje émit des règlements sur les *tekke*, valables dans sa zone de juridiction (Serbie, Kosovo et Macédoine) — ce qui ne fut jamais le cas de son homologue de Sarajevo. Les principaux points de ce texte, qui ne semble pas avoir pu être appliqué étant donné son décalage avec la réalité, sont les suivants. Les *tekke* y étaient définis comme “des institutions de la Communauté musulmane, [fonctionnant] conformément aux prescriptions de la religion musulmane”. On devait y faire en premier lieu le *namaz* (les prières rituelles) et le jeûne du mois de Ramadan, et en second lieu (seulement) le *zikr* et les prières surrogatoires. Ces établissements ne devaient pas avoir d'autres buts. Leurs bâtiments et biens étaient déclarés propriété de la Communauté. De nouveaux *tekke* ne pouvaient être fondés que là où ne se trouvait pas d'établissement de la même confrérie et seulement si y existait déjà une mosquée et un *mekteb*. Les cheikhs seraient dorénavant nommés par le Ulema-medžlis, les muftis étant leurs supérieurs.¹⁵

Ces essais de contrôler les confréries s'accompagnaient régulièrement, dans les rapports d'activité des Ulema-medžlis de Sarajevo et de Skoplje, d'accusations dont le type se rapprochaient tout à fait de celui des critiques wahhābites envers les *tarikats* ou, plus généralement, de celui des polémiques classiques en islam entre derviches et ulémas: la Chariat n'était pas respectée dans les *tekke*, les cheikhs ne tenaient pas compte des réglementations émanant de la Communauté officielle, etc. Par exemple, les résultats de l'enquête du Ulema-medžlis effectuée en 1938-39 faisaient apparaître que les

¹⁴ Cf. Anonyme, 'Prvi izvještaj o radu Ulema-Medžlisa u Sarajevu', *Glasnik Islamske Vjerske Zajednice* (= *GIVZ*) i/1 (Belgrade-Sarajevo 1933) 31ss., cf. 51; Anonyme, *Pregled rada Vrhovnog Starješinstva IVZ-a od 31/10/1930 - 31/10/1933* (Sarajevo) 88; et dans *GIVZ* ii/2 (1934) 109.

¹⁵ Cf. Anonyme, *Pregled*; et Anonyme, 'Uredba o tekijama na području Ulema-medžlisa u Skoplju', *GIVZ* ii/6 (1934) 360-364.

cheikhs étaient incultes, qu'il n'y avait pas de différence nette entre les *tarikats*, qu'être cheikh était une profession "commode pour vivre facilement" aux dépens de la population crédule, que, la plupart du temps, seul le *zikh* était fait dans les *tekke* et que l'on n'y faisait pas les prières rituelles.¹⁶ Les rapporteurs ajoutaient:

'Ce qui est encore pire est que nous nous sommes rendus compte qu'à certains endroits, ces *tekke*, au lieu d'être utiles, causent des désastres. Souvent, une énorme masse de gens, aussi bien musulmans qu'infidèles, assistent à l'exécution du *zikh* dans les *tekke*. Les musulmans, et surtout les non musulmans, ne regardent pas cela comme une cérémonie religieuse, une prière, mais plutôt comme un divertissement et ils adoptent un comportement en conséquence. Le résultat en est très dommageable, car les chrétiens voient dans de telles manifestations le vrai rituel de l'islam, alors que chez les musulmans se crée une façon dénaturée de voir les prières. Un fait encore plus regrettable est que, dans certains centres musulmans [situés] dans le Sud, il existe un important antagonisme entre les membres de certaines *tarikats*, ce qui détruit la force sociale et toute action communautaire. Encore plus dure est la confrontation des cheikhs et des derviches avec les fonctionnaires religieux, qui dépasse souvent toutes les limites et met les deux camps l'un contre l'autre dans une âpre lutte, ce qui laisse de profondes traces dans toute la vie des musulmans'.¹⁷

Le culte des saints, très étroitement lié à l'islam confrérique, fit l'objet en 1939 d'une attaque particulière. La Direction des *vakf* demanda en effet au Ulema-medžlis d'émettre une *fetva* déterminant si la restauration et l'embellissement des *türbe* devaient être à sa charge ou non et si la présence de troncs dans les *türbe*, pour les aumônes, était licite. Une *fetva* fut donc émise par Mehmed Ali Čerimović, président du Ulema-medžlis de Sarajevo. Il y déterminait — au reste de façon très peu logique — trois catégories de *türbe*: les tombeaux ouverts édifiés au dessus de tombes ne présentant pas de particularités; les tombeaux, ouverts ou fermés, élevés au dessus de tombes de bienfaiteurs, de grands savants, de gens pieux; et enfin, les tombeaux qui seraient de la catégorie précédente si le "peuple ignorant" n'y avait pas instauré des *ziyaret* (visites, pèlerinages) et des pratiques non autorisées, pensant que le mort peut intercéder auprès de Dieu en sa faveur. Le texte de la décision juridique faisait plus amplement état de ces pratiques illicites: formulation de vœux sur les tombes, récitation de *tevhid*, dépôt d'aumônes dans des

¹⁶ Anonyme, *Izveštaj o radu ulema-medžlisa u Skoplju u 1938 i 1939 godini* (Sarajevo, Izdanje Reis-ul-uleme islamske vjerske zajednice Kraljevine Jugoslavije 1941) cf. 41-44.

¹⁷ Ibid. 43.

troncs, sacrifices d'animaux, allumage de bougies, présence d'un *türbedar* (gardien) chargé de l'entretien des lieux, mais aussi d'aider le peuple dans ce culte non autorisé, en fournissant la cuvette et le broc, en laissant des serviettes pour les ablutions du mort et en allumant des bougies pour que celui-ci voit lorsqu'il se lève la nuit. La *fetva* concluait que les *türbe* et les *ziyaret* étaient autorisés dans le cas des deux premières catégories, mais pas dans le cas de la troisième, surtout lorsque les visites en question étaient effectuées par les femmes. L'argumentation s'appuyait sur le *hadith* disant que le Prophète maudit les femmes qui font le *ziyaret* sur les tombes, les gens qui construisent des *mesdjid* sur les tombes et ceux qui éclairent celles-ci. En conséquence, Mehmed Ali Ćerimović prescrivait la fermeture de certains *türbe* de Sarajevo fréquentés par des gens incultes, ainsi que l'interdiction de l'allumage des bougies et des chandeliers pour les autres.¹⁸ Cette *fetva* entraîna immédiatement la démolition de certains *türbe*. Néanmoins, des voix s'élevèrent contre la décision jugée invalide par certains, et le Reis ul-ulema fut contraint non seulement d'ordonner l'arrêt des destructions, mais aussi de suspendre la *fetva*.¹⁹

À côté des attaques précédentes, il faut placer dans un registre plus théorique les deux articles "Il n'y a pas de monachisme en islam" (1933) et "La question des *tekke* en Yougoslavie" (1934) de Mehmed Handžić, un jeune et brillant *‘ālim* de Sarajevo, tout frais émoulu de l'Université d'al-Azhar au Caire, qui, à l'âge de 26 ans, était devenu, en 1932, enseignant à la *medrese* de Gazi Hurevbeg.²⁰

¹⁸ Rešad Kadić, 'Uzbuna sarajevskih derviša. Pred gašenjem svijeća i zatvaranjem sarajevskih turbeta...', *Jugoslavenski list* xxi/61 (Sarajevo, 12 mars 1939) 10.

¹⁹ Mehmed Potogija, Mehmed Ibrahimović et H.M. Akif Handžić, 'Sarajevski derviši o molitvama nad grobovima. Da li se može davati milostinja u 'katance'', *Jugoslavenski list* xxi/69 (Sarajevo, 22 mars 1939) 7, qui démontraient point par point l'invalidité de la *fetva*, et insistaient surtout sur le fait qu'il fallait plutôt s'attacher à combattre l'indifférence des musulmans de Sarajevo envers la religion et donc aller dans le sens opposé à celui de la *fetva*.

²⁰ Mehmed Handžić (1906-1944), naquit à Sarajevo, où il fit ses premières études qu'il poursuivit à al-Azhar. De retour dans le pays, il enseigna dans la *medrese* de Gazi Husrevbeg, puis à l'Ecole Supérieure de la Chariat et de théologie, et fut directeur de la Bibliothèque Gazi Husrevbeg. Il est l'auteur de divers ouvrages de théologie et d'écrits sur l'histoire des musulmans de Bosnie. En *fiqh*, il aurait suivi les enseignements d'Ibn Taymiyya [(cf. R.Y. Ebied et M. J. L. Young, dans EI, Suppl., livraison 5-6, 354 (de l'édition française); et A. Popovic, dans *Dictionnaire biographique des savants et grandes figures du monde musulman périphérique du XIXe siècle à nos jours*, fasc. no 1 (Paris, avril 1992) 52].

En ce qui concerne le premier de ces textes, il s'agissait d'un commentaire d'une partie d'un *hadith* disant: "il n'y a pas de monachisme en islam". Dans un style très classique, M. Handžić étayait sa démonstration par des citations de différents grands auteurs, ainsi que par des *hadith*. Pour lui, le monachisme (*rehbanijjet*) impliquant retraite dans des lieux isolés, jeûne, port d'habits grossiers, mortifications du corps, chasteté, etc. n'existait pas en islam. Ces attitudes avaient été inventées par les hommes; elles n'avaient jamais été commandées par Dieu. Le musulman ne devait pas se laisser aller, comme l'impliquerait le monachisme; il devait au contraire lutter jusqu'au bout. De toute évidence, les pratiques de certains derviches — telles les retraites, les mortifications du corps, etc. —, étaient ainsi condamnées par l'auteur, puisque contraires aux principes de l'islam. Dans ce texte, Mehmed Handžić tentait aussi de rectifier la fausse interprétation qui était faite en général de cette phrase, à savoir qu'il n'existe pas de clerc, ni de clergé en islam, faite par ceux qui voudraient se passer du savoir des ulémas:

'Il est vrai qu'en islam il n'y a pas de clergé dans le sens que ce terme a dans le christianisme. Mais, il n'est pas vrai qu'il n'y a pas en islam des gens savants dans la religion, qui sont les seuls à être appelés à résoudre les questions religieuses. ... De tout ce qui précède, on voit bien si les ennemis des hodžas et des ulemas ont raison, qui, sans aucun droit et aucune capacité, se mettent à résoudre les plus grandes questions religieuses selon leur vouloir, et lorsqu'on leur fait la remarque, ils s'abritent derrière la phrase 'Lâ rehbanijjete fil-islâmi'. Dans l'islam il n'y a ni clerc ni clergé'.

Bien qu'il ne mentionnât pas directement les *tarikât* et les soufis, il est clair que Mehmed Handžić pensait notamment aux cheikhs qui n'étaient pas suffisamment, voire pas du tout, versés dans les sciences religieuses.

Le second texte, en revanche, avait directement pour thème les confréries et le fonctionnement de leurs établissements en Yougoslavie. M. Handžić y mettait en cause les déviations, commises en leur sein, vis-à-vis de la Communauté musulmane et de la croyance islamique pure. Pour lui, dans le *tasavvuf*, s'étaient infiltrées petit à petit des idées panthéistes et contraires à l'islam.

Il reprochait surtout à leur membres d'avoir fait des *tekke* des centres ne servant que les confréries en tant que telles. Il écrivait qu'on n'y enseignait ni la lecture et l'écriture, ni la Chariat (comme c'était le cas des *tekke* implantés en Afrique noire par exemple), et qu'ils n'étaient pas non plus des sièges de missionnaires de l'islam.

Il précisait qu'au contraire, leurs membres cultivaient une hostilité envers les gens qui connaissent l'islam, envers les *medrese* et les règles de la Chariat, et ne faisaient jamais appel aux gens savants. Il expliquait que leur unique service ne consistait qu'en un "pauvre et misérable petit *zkr*" accompagné parfois de danses et de musique, tromperie vis-à-vis de la Chariat, n'ayant rien à voir avec la dévotion et le respect du Dieu Très Haut. M. Handžić pensait donc que les *tekke* étaient détournés de leurs fonctions premières — à savoir, pourvoir à l'éducation et à la religiosité des musulmans — tout en continuant à profiter des revenus des *vakf*.²¹ Et l'auteur de donner l'exemple du *tekke* mevlevi du Caire, ainsi détourné de ses fonctions, et que les autorités avaient transformé en école d'artisanat pour les enfants pauvres. M. Handžić s'en prenaient aussi tout particulièrement aux cheikhs non qualifiés, à ceux "vivant comme des parasites", alors qu'ils devraient être savants, pieux, connaître parfaitement la Chariat et s'en tenir strictement à ses prescriptions, en ne se contentant pas d'être versés dans la danse, la musique, la tromperie, le maniement des sabres et des *šiš*. L'auteur dirigeait ensuite plus spécialement ses attaques contre la confrérie des Bektachis, répandue surtout parmi les Albanais, contre laquelle il était nécessaire, selon lui, de prendre de sévères mesures. Il rappelait que, d'après les historiens, ses membres ne respectaient absolument pas les cinq piliers de l'islam, se considérant supérieurs aux autres musulmans et par conséquent dégagés de ces obligations; qu'ils avaient une trinité, comme les chrétiens, de même qu'une sorte de confession; qu'ils pouvaient boire de l'alcool; que la plupart de leurs dirigeants ne se mariaient pas; et qu'ils croyaient à la science des chiffres et au passage de l'âme dans un autre corps après la mort (*tenasuh*).

En conclusion, M. Handžić dressait la liste des croyances et pratiques que les membres des *tarikats* se devaient d'abandonner afin de respecter les préceptes de l'islam et de regagner les rangs de la Communauté musulmane — autant d'accusations à l'encontre des soufis, ou de certains soufis:

'On ne doit ni supprimer, ni reconnaître les *tarikats* comme *tarikats*, mais exiger de leur adeptes qu'ils rejettent tout ce qui est contraire à l'islam. Qu'ils rejettent les diverses croyances

²¹ M. Handžić prétendait que pratiquement tous les *tekkes* avaient des *vakfs*, ce qui était loin d'être le cas, en particulier au Kosovo et en Macédoine.

et bavardages panthéistes; qu'ils ne demandent aide et assistance qu'à Dieu; qu'ils ne croient pas à l'infailibilité des cheikhs, car seul le Prophète est innocent et sans défaut; qu'ils respectent les règles de la Chariat, et qu'ils ne considèrent pas qu'elles sont superficielles et que eux seuls détiennent l'essence de la connaissance; qu'ils ne s'inclinent pas les uns devant les autres, qu'ils abandonnent la danse qu'ils considèrent comme un acte de piété et une bonne action; qu'ils n'utilisent pas la musique au moment du *zikr* et des prières; qu'ils effectuent le *zikr* tel que la Chariat le demande, calmement, à voix modérée, avec humilité et en conformité avec les bonnes manières; qu'ils délaissent les mortifications avec les sabres et les *šiš*; qu'ils abandonnent les diverses tromperies et bagatelles, telles que le fait d'avaler du feu et des choses semblables que les idolâtres en Inde et les êtres les plus détestés par Allah savent faire beaucoup mieux et plus adroitement; qu'ils ne consomment pas de boissons alcooliques, car l'homme ivre n'est bon pour aucune prière; que la chose la plus sainte soit pour eux de s'en tenir aux règles de la Chariat et de se soumettre à celle-ci; ...'.

Durant la période 1918-1941, les courants anti-soufis de Yougoslavie furent donc menés par les ulémas de Bosnie-Herzégovine, aussi bien vis-à-vis des confréries de leur région que de celles du sud du pays. Les conséquences de leurs attaques furent néanmoins sans commune mesure pour les *tarikât* bosniaco-herzégoviennes, dont les *tekke* en activité en 1945 ne se comptaient plus que sur les doigts de la main, par rapport à celles de Kosovo et de Macédoine, dont le fonctionnement, voire même le développement n'avait pas été réellement entravé. La période suivante, celle de la Yougoslavie communiste, amena une évolution relativement différente par rapport à cette situation, présentant cependant certaines continuités.

La fin de la Seconde guerre mondiale vit, en Yougoslavie, l'instauration d'un régime communiste, qui, s'il s'émancipa rapidement de la tutelle soviétique et plus tard permit à ses travailleurs d'aller vendre leur force en Occident, n'en resta pas moins un régime communiste, dont la politique consistait en premier lieu à contrôler la population et à museler toute opposition éventuelle. Dans les premières années, le sort des communautés religieuses, et en particulier des confréries mystiques musulmanes, senties comme des foyers potentiels d'opposition mais pouvant aussi servir de relais au pouvoir, dépendait totalement de cette politique menée par les autorités de l'Etat relayées par les nouvelles autorités

religieuses mises en place.²²

Ainsi, en 1951, au cours de la première session ordinaire de l'assemblée des *vakf*, un débat s'ouvrit à propos des *tekke* et de leur place dans le budget central de la Communauté. Cette question ne fut en fait que le prétexte à une série d'attaques contre les derviches, principalement axées sur la consommation d'alcool dans certains *tekke*, et sur le caractère "dépassé" et "arriéré" des confréries,²³ cause du retard de certaines populations. L'argumentation n'avait donc non seulement rien de théologique, mais encore pratiquement rien de religieux. La dialectique était, somme toute, typiquement communiste, et cette séance ne fut qu'un prélude à la décision du Ulema-medžlis de Bosnie-Herzégovine, prise en 1952, de fermer purement et simplement tous les *tekke* existant encore dans cette république fédérée. Les motifs invoqués dans le texte de la décision étaient, d'une part, que certains cheikhs avaient des pratiques qui n'avaient rien à voir avec les règles de l'islam et qui allaient même à l'encontre de celles-ci, et d'autre part que les *tekke* freinaient le progrès et l'avancement des larges masses musulmanes.²⁴

Le pragmatisme — de règle dans tous les domaines — mena cependant les autorités religieuses musulmanes, de concert avec les autorités politiques, à adopter une attitude différente envers les confréries au Kosovo et en Macédoine (la décision précédente ne concernait que les *tekke* de Bosnie-Herzégovine). Ainsi, quelques mois plus tard, le 17 novembre 1952, lorsqu'une discussion eut lieu, au cours de la seconde session du Ulema-medžlis de Yougoslavie, sur la situation des *tarikats* au Kosovo et en Macédoine et sur les mesures à prendre envers elles, on jugea que la question s'avérait beaucoup plus sensible et délicate que dans le cas de la Bosnie-Herzégovine, compte tenu du nombre beaucoup plus élevé de *tekke*

²² Voir à ce sujet, A. Popovic, *Les musulmans yougoslaves (1945-1989). Médiateurs et métaphores* (Lausanne 1990).

²³ Les détails de cette argumentation sont les suivants: les *tekke* n'existaient pas du temps du Prophète, et s'ils ont réellement un caractère historique, ils sont dans ce cas "à mettre dans les musées".

²⁴ Cf. Anonyme, 'Odluka o prestanku rada tekija u NR BiH', *Glasnik Vrhovnog Islamskog Starješinstva (=GVIS) iii/5-7* (Sarajevo, mai-juillet 1952) 199. Il est à noter que dans cette attaque dirigée contre les *tarikats*, l'ingénieur Fazlija Alikalfić, doyen de la faculté de Sarajevo (et qui ne faisait donc pas partie du corps des ulémas), joua un grand rôle.

actifs, de cheikhs et de derviches.²⁵ En fait, même s'il y eut des attaques visant à prendre des mesures identiques contre les *tarikats* dans le sud du pays, dénonçant leur action contre la pureté de l'islam et l'élévation des musulmans albanais et turcs,²⁶ il semble que le régime aurait cherché, dans une certaine mesure, à utiliser les confréries en Macédoine et au Kosovo, afin de faire un contrepoids aux ulémas,²⁷ rôle que celles-ci ne pouvaient en aucun cas jouer en Bosnie-Herzégovine du fait de leur faible implantation.

Les autorités musulmanes officielles, toujours dominées par les ulémas de Bosnie-Herzégovine, continuèrent néanmoins, dans leurs rapports, à mettre en cause le fonctionnement des *tekke*, et notamment la non-qualification des cheikhs et la persistance de l'utilisation d'instruments de musique, des transpercements, des danses au cours des *zikr*, la fabrication d'amulettes, la divination, la guérison, de même que les "supercheries" faites par les enfants de cheikhs auprès de la population.²⁸ On insistait également sur la nécessité d'émettre des règlements particuliers, pour les régions où se trouvaient des *tekke*, spécifiant par exemple que les cheikhs devraient avoir les qualifications requises et être âgés de plus de vingt-cinq ans. Mais si un déclin s'amorça aussi pour les confréries de Kosovo et de Macédoine, il faut y voir les conséquences d'un climat politique pesant, luttant — surtout dans les villes — contre les pratiques religieuses, sans oublier celles du départ d'une partie de la population turque vers la Turquie dans les années cinquante.

Vers la fin des années soixante et le début des années soixante-dix, le contexte politique yougoslave évolua dans le sens d'un certain

²⁵ Cf. Anonyme, 'Zapisnik II. Saziva Vrhovnog Vakufskog sabora', *GVIS* xv(iii)/8-12 (août-décembre 1952) 286-312 (cf. 297-98, 300, 303, 304, 306 et 307).

²⁶ Cf. par exemple, Mehmed Salihspahić, 'Islam bez mistike i sujeverja', *GVIS* xvi (iv)/1-4 (janvier-avril 1953) 29-32.

²⁷ Cf. Anonyme, 'Ahmadiyya i derviški redovi su pomagani od komunista u Jugoslaviji', *Bosanski pogledi* xiii (Fribourg?, mars 1962) 4, qui expose cette idée et donne l'exemple du Šejh Hasan de Prizren, qui aurait joué un très grand rôle au service du régime après la Seconde guerre mondiale, ainsi que celui des Bektachis qui auraient été utilisés pour faire de la propagande titiste en Albanie. D'après Hasan Kaleši, il n'y aurait pas eu d'interdiction en Macédoine également, parce que certains cheikhs étaient liés au Parti communiste.

²⁸ Un rapport de 1954 avait pourtant indiqué que les cheikhs de Kosovo et de Macédoine avaient accepté de se conformer à la Chariat (et par conséquent d'abandonner l'usage des instruments de musique, les transpercements pendant les *zikr*, etc.).

assouplissement. On peut penser que cette évolution permit la réapparition, ou la réaffirmation, des courants confrériques et soufis, à laquelle on assista à cette même époque. En Bosnie-Herzégovine, où, malgré la fermeture des *tekke* en 1952, une certaine activité confrérique s'était maintenue de façon souterraine,²⁹ les milieux soufis tentèrent, en 1969, de rouvrir deux des *tekke* de Sarajevo. Cette tentative fut de courte durée, puisque ces établissements furent à nouveau fermés par les autorités, trois ans plus tard, en 1972.

Cependant, la véritable dynamique de cette réaffirmation vint, non pas des milieux soufis de Bosnie-Herzégovine, mais de ceux du Kosovo, sous l'impulsion du cheikh rifā'i de Prizren, Šejh Džemali, dont l'action personnelle fut sans aucun doute déterminante. De fait, en 1971, celui-ci réunissait, parmi les cheikhs, un comité d'initiative pour la création d'une Union des confréries. Puis, il formait, le 12 novembre 1972, ce comité d'initiative. Enfin, deux ans plus tard, le 12 novembre 1974, il organisait l'assemblée de fondation de la SIDRA (*Savez Islamskih derviških redova Alije u SFRJ*, Union des ordres de derviches de Yougoslavie), durant laquelle des statuts étaient élaborés, et lançait le premier numéro d'un bulletin d'information intitulé *Hu* ("Lui").³⁰ Trois ans plus tard, un nouveau pas fut franchi par Šejh Džemali qui transforma, le 28 septembre 1977, la SIDRA (Union des ordres de derviches...) en ZIDRA (*Zajednica islamskih derviških redova Alije u SFRJ*, Communauté des ordres de derviches...). Il élevait ainsi son organisation au rang d'une communauté musulmane concurrente de la Communauté musulmane officielle.

L'action de Šejh Džemali, bien que n'ayant fédéré essentiellement qu'une partie des milieux confrériques du Kosovo, eut d'importantes répercussions en Bosnie-Herzégovine. En effet, afin de détourner de la SIDRA les derviches de cette république, les autorités musulmanes officielles se virent dans l'obligation de "lacher du lest"

²⁹ D'après Fejzulah Hadžibajrić, 'Tesavuf, tarikati i tekije na području Starješinstva IZ BiH danas', *GVIS* xlii/3 (mai-juin 1979) 271-277, il y eut toujours une certaine activité confrérique à travers des réunions de *zikr*, ainsi qu'à travers les programmes de *Mevlud* et de *Tevhid* dans lesquels étaient inclus des parties relevant de pratiques soufies. Ces activités se déroulaient, en dehors de Sarajevo, dans les *mesdžid* et les mosquées, et à Sarajevo, dans les maisons privées.

³⁰ Toute la correspondance entre la *Sidra/Zidra* et les autorités musulmanes officielles est mentionnée dans *Bilten Hu*, 1986/i.

et de donner à deux cheikhs, A. Fočak et F. Hadžibajrić, en mai 1977, l'autorisation de former un Tarikatski Centar (Centre des *tarikat*) à Sarajevo.³¹ Puis, en novembre 1978, la décision de l'interdiction des *tekke* et des *tarikat* fut levée de façon tacite, et, avec l'accord du président de la Communauté musulmane de Bosnie-Herzégovine, Ahmed Smajlović, les membres des conseils des deux *tekke* rouverts — Hadži Sinanova Tekija (kadiri) et Nadmlini Tekija (nakšibendi-mevlevi) — furent nommés.³² Cependant, ce n'est que le 30 mars 1989 que l'interdiction de 1952 fut officiellement levée.³³

Face à cette réaffirmation des courants soufis, les représentants de l'islam "orthodoxe" adoptèrent une attitude nuancée. D'un côté, on vient de le voir, ils entérinèrent graduellement le renouveau soufi en Bosnie-Herzégovine, et de l'autre ils rejetèrent les initiatives du Šejh Džemali et critiquèrent les pratiques confrériques en usage dans le sud du pays. Il semble que cette attitude ait été dictée à la Communauté dans un souci de récupérer à elle, en Bosnie-Herzégovine, la dynamique de ce "renouveau" soufi. Ainsi, dès 1975, l'organe officiel de la Communauté diffusa le texte d'une conférence de Mahmud Traljić, dans lequel l'article de M. Handžić, paru en 1934, était analysé. M. Traljić expliquait que son aîné ne s'était pas élevé contre le *tasavvuf*, mais contre ceux des soufis qui s'éloignent de la Chariat, concluant que l'antagonisme entre les ulémas et les derviches devait être dépassé, pour laisser la place à une alliance entre ulémas et derviches "modérés" ou "savants", contre les derviches "extrémistes" ou "déviant".³⁴ Dans les années

³¹ Sur la formation du Tarikatski Centar, cf. Abdulah Fočak, 'Zar i ti brate, Zakire', *Preporod* xvii (480) (Sarajevo, 1er septembre 1990) 2 et 16.

³² Cf. Fejzulah Hadžibajrić, 'Povrat tekije u Islamsku zajednicu Jugoslavije', *Preporod* ix (450) (Sarajevo, 15 mai 1989) 9.

³³ Cf. Fejzulah Hadžibajrić, 'Poslije povratka tekija u Islamsku zajednicu Jugoslavije', *Preporod* xv (455) (Sarajevo, 1er août 1989) 2; et B.P., 'Tekije vraćene u okrilje Islamske zajednice', *Preporod* xiii (453) (Sarajevo, 1er juillet 1989) 6. Il faut noter que cette mesure, qui, pour les milieux soufis, effaçait le déséquilibre anormal entre Bosnie-Herzégovine et Kosovo-Macédoine (Hadžibajrić, 'Tesavuf'), s'accompagnait d'une clause précisant que les *tekke* seraient dorénavant la propriété de la Communauté musulmane officielle et que leur activité devraient s'effectuer conformément aux normes de cette Communauté (Anonyme, 'Zaključci Vrhovnog Sabora Islamske Zajednice u SFRJ', *Preporod* viii (448) (15 avril 1989) 20.

³⁴ Cf. Mahmud Traljić, 'Hadži Mehmed ef. Handžić i tesavvuf (Predavanje održano na

qui suivirent, le *Glasnik* continua à offrir à ses lecteurs des articles sur la mystique musulmane, présentée comme la seconde composante de l'islam, inséparable de la Chariat.³⁵ Les attaques contre le “mauvais soufisme”, qui s'écarterait de la “bonne voie”, et surtout refusait le contrôle des autorités musulmanes officielles, n'en furent que plus âpres. En 1975, la Communauté musulmane refusa de reconnaître la création de la SIDRA et chercha à prendre des mesures pour empêcher son fonctionnement, en invoquant qu'il n'y avait pas de place pour une telle association qui ne pouvait que détruire l'unité dans les rangs de la communauté musulmane et que, en outre, elle ne reconnaissait d'aucune façon l'existence des ordres de derviches.³⁶ De même, les réactions parues en 1978-79 dans *Preporod*, journal de la Communauté musulmane, à la suite de la transformation de la SIDRA en ZIDRA (Communauté des ordres de derviches...) et de la parution du second numéro du bulletin *Hu* furent violentes. On y traitait Šejh Džemali et ses acolytes de gens illettrés, ignorants, primitifs, cherchant à avoir le monopole de

Šebi aruskoj akademiji u Sarajevu 17 XII 1974 god.)', *GVIS* xxxviii/7-8 (juillet-août 1975) 387-389. À propos du texte de M. Handžić, cf. supra.

³⁵ Cf. Fuad Djidić, 'Šariat i tarikat', *GVIS* xli/2 (mars-avril 1977) 127-130; Dž. Čehajić, 'Šariat i tesavvuf (tarikāt)', *GVIS* xli/2 (mars-avril 1978) 109-112 (avec une conclusion que *tarikāt* ne peut pas exister sans Chariat et que la *Sidra* ruine l'unité de la communauté musulmane); et F. Hadžibajrić, 'Iz knjige «Istine o tesavvufu»', *GVIS*, xli/3 (mai-juin 1978) 242-247. Dans le journal *Preporod*, on note également un article du même type, de Nijaz Šukrić, 'Tesavuf u našim krajevima', *Preporod* iii (178) (Sarajevo, 1-15 février 1978) 4, contre le soufisme déviant, mais pour un soufisme “savant”.

³⁶ Cf. Anonyme, 'Izveštaj o radu Vrhovnog Islamskog Starješinstva islamske zajednice u SFR Jugoslaviji od 26. decembra 1973. do 16 maja 1975. godine podnesen vrhovnom saboru islamske zajednice u SFR Jugoslaviji na zasjedanju u Sarajevu dana 17 maja. 1975. godine', *GVIS* xxxviii/5-6 (mai-juin 1975) 281-306 (cf. 296), qui précise que Šejh Džemali avait envoyé les statuts de la *Sidra* aux autorités musulmanes officielles en leur demandant de les examiner et de faire d'éventuelles remarques, d'où la réaction desdites autorités. Néanmoins, dix ans plus tard, le 14 octobre 1985, la *Zidra* (qui fit suite à la *Sidra*) obtint l'enregistrement officiel de “Udruženje Mešajih [Šejhova] SR Srbije i SAP Kosova” (Association des cheikhs de la République de Serbie et de la Région autonome de Kosovo). En revanche, le 6 octobre 1987, les membres du “Conseil de coordination pour le développement des organisations et des associations de citoyens” et de la “Commission de la République de Macédoine pour les questions religieuses et les associations religieuses” refusa la création d'une communauté de derviches de Macédoine, que Šejh Džemali avait voulu faire créer. Ce refus s'accompagna d'une mise en cause de l'action paternaliste de Šejh Džemali auprès des Gitans de Macédoine. (Cf. G.R., 'Komu mu trebaat novi derviši?', *Nova Makedonija* (Skopje, 6 octobre 1987) 3, ainsi que la réponse de Šejh Džemali dans *Derviš* (octobre 1988) 36-40).

l'islam. Le bulletin était présenté comme une provocation, une honte. Et l'existence de deux communautés musulmanes était jugée impossible. Un témoin du Kosovo dressait une liste accablante des déviances des derviches de sa région:

'ils ne jeûnent pas, appellent les sunnites 'Jezids' et tournent en ridicule ceux qui jeûnent; ils ne font pas le *namaz*; ils se réunissent autour des tombes où ils font le *zikh* et laissent de l'argent; ne respectent pas le Ramadan, mais font le *matem*; ils ne respectent pas le Coran, car "il a été écrit par Osman"; ils se transpercent, boivent de l'alcool, racontent des histoires sur leurs liens avec les anges, les cheytans, etc.; en devenant derviches, ils se considèrent libérés de toutes les obligations islamiques; le cheikh s'occupe de la vie de ses derviches dans les deux mondes; etc.'³⁷

C'est en 1979 — alors que le Tarikatski Centar a été créé deux ans plus tôt et que certains *tekke* ont été officiellement rouverts un an auparavant en Bosnie-Herzégovine — que la question des *tarikats* est débattue de façon officielle au sein de la Communauté musulmane. Ce débat fut lancé par un article de H. Djozo — l'un des personnages les plus hauts placés dans la hiérarchie de la Communauté musulmane de Yougoslavie d'alors —, dans lequel celui-ci expliquait qu'il fallait lutter contre "les égarements et les tares du passé, signes de primitivisme et d'arriération, afin que l'islam fût purifié des conceptions rétrogrades et déformées". En particulier, pour H. Djozo, il fallait lutter contre les ordres de derviches — dont le problème était toujours actuel —, parce que, d'une part, leurs membres professaient des choses n'ayant aucun rapport ni avec la *tarikats*, ni avec la *šariat*, mais relevant plutôt du *širk* (idolâtrie, polythéisme) et niant l'islam dans son essence, et que, d'autre part, leurs cadres étaient ignorants (*džahil*) et "autoproclamés".³⁸ Le débat en lui-même eut lieu au cours de la Quatrième conférence des représentants des plus hauts organes de la Communauté musulmane de Yougoslavie, tenue les 17 et 18 mars 1979, et donna lieu à la publication d'une dizaine de textes sur la question, regroupés dans un fascicule de *Glasnik*. Les conclusions allaient naturellement toujours dans le même sens. Il est intéressant cependant de relever, dans les détails, certaines des argumentations

³⁷ Cf. S. R., 'Boli me kada vidim umjesto islama...', *Preporod* ii (202) (Sarajevo, 15-31 janvier 1979) 9, qui se demandait pourquoi quelque'un d'aussi respectable que F. Hadžibajrić se permettait d'être dans le comité de rédaction du bulletin *Hu*.

³⁸ Cf. Husejin Djozo, 'Boriti se za čisti islam', *Preporod* ii (202) (Sarajevo, 15-31 janvier 1979) 1.

soutenant ces textes.³⁹ Husejin Džozo s'appuyait par exemple sur les écrits d'un auteur égyptien bien connu, Dr Aḥmad Amīn,⁴⁰ pour décrire la décadence du soufisme à la suite de l'absorption d'éléments étrangers à l'islam, d'origines diverses — iranienne, indienne, hellénistique, chrétienne. Ainsi le chiisme, le panthéisme, le néoplatonisme, les *keramet* (miracles), la croyance en un pôle dans la hiérarchie des saints (*kutb*), dans les *evliya* (saints) devaient-ils être rejetés par les soufis. H. Džozo proposait donc, pour régler l'activité des confréries — qu'il considérait d'ailleurs toujours illégale —, d'établir un "codex" renfermant les principes islamiques de base que leurs membres se devraient de respecter. Sur la base de ce "codex", des statuts devraient être élaborés pour les confréries de l'ensemble du pays, dans lequel serait défini, en particulier, le statut des ordres de derviches au sein de la Communauté musulmane.⁴¹ L'article de Džemal Salihspahić précisait les croyances, les attitudes et les pratiques non-islamiques dont les *tarikats* devaient "être nettoyées": musique, danse, fabrication d'amulettes et de talismans, magie, tendances "anti-culturelles et anti-rationnelles", croyance en la métempsycose (*hulul*), fausse explication du fantastique et du transcendantal (*tešbih*) et de l'immanence de Dieu (*tenzih*), culte de la personnalité envers les cheikhs et trop fort respect des morts et de leur *türbe*. Dž. Salihspahić insistait lui aussi sur la mise sous contrôle des confréries par la Communauté et sur leur mise au service de la Communauté, argumentant que le *tasavvuf* ne pouvait en aucune façon remplacer la Chariat.⁴² Quant au directeur de la *medrese* Alaudin de Priština, Šerif Ahmeti, il se contentait de souligner le non respect des prières rituelles et du jeûne, la consommation d'alcool, la

³⁹ Notons que, parmi les articles inclus dans le fascicule en question, on trouve la réédition du texte de Mehmed Handžić sur la question des *tekke* en Yougoslavie (cf. Mehmed Handžić, 'Pitanje tekija u Jugoslaviji', *GLVZ* ii/4, 197-204).

⁴⁰ L'ouvrage cité par Husejin Džozo est intitulé *Zuhr al-islam* (éd. Aḥmad Amīn, i-iv, Le Caire 1964). Rappelons ici que la Yougoslavie de l'époque entretenait des liens étroits avec l'Égypte de Nasser, et que de nombreux jeunes musulmans de Yougoslavie étaient étudiants à al-Azhar.

⁴¹ Cf. Husejin Džozo, 'Pravi put i stramputice tesavufa', *GVIŠ* xlii/3 (mai-juin 1979) 235-241. S'exprimant au cours de la même année, H. Džozo prétendait que le vrai *tesavvuf* était "une défense contre l'intrusion du monde matériel" (cf. Anonyme, 'Izvještaj o radu VIŠ-a u 1978/79. godini', *GVIŠ* xlii/4 (juillet-août 1979) 349-384 (cf. 371-372).

⁴² Cf. Džemal Salihspahić, 'Neke negativne pojave kod pristalica tesavufa', *GVIŠ* xlii/3 (mai-juin 1979) 278-281.

non qualification des cheikhs et leur méconnaissance de l'islam. Et, pour illustrer l'éloignement des confréries vis-à-vis de la Communauté musulmane, il citait l'exemple des dix villages de la région du Has (dans les environs de Prizren) qui ne demandaient plus d'imams pour guider les prières durant le mois de Ramadan.⁴³

Par la suite, on rappela périodiquement les décisions prises au cours de la réunion de 1979 afin de combattre le dervichisme déviant,⁴⁴ en ajoutant parfois quelques nouveaux témoignages sur les déviations en question.⁴⁵ La situation en était là en Yougoslavie, vers 1990, donc peu de temps avant l'éclatement du pays et le déclenchement de la guerre civile en Croatie et en Bosnie-Herzégovine. Depuis, il y a eu une recomposition totale, avec la création de Communautés musulmanes distinctes en Bosnie-Herzégovine, au Kosovo et en Macédoine. Nous ignorons pour l'instant quelles sont, dans ce tout nouveau contexte, les tendances qui se font jour vis-à-vis des confréries.

Le cas de l'Albanie est très différent de celui de la Yougoslavie. Ce que nous savons actuellement de l'histoire de la communauté musulmane dans ce pays⁴⁶ semble en effet montrer qu'il n'y a pas eu, avant 1944, d'important courant anti-soufi comparable à celui qui

⁴³ Cf. Šerif Ahmeti, 'Kosovska pseudo učenja tesavufa', *GVIS* xlii/3 (mai-juin 1979) 282-285 [paru également en albanais dans *Edukata islame* ix/25 (Priština 1979) 48-52].

⁴⁴ Comme dans *Preporod* xii (236) (15 juin 1980) 11.

⁴⁵ Ainsi, le journal *Preporod* publiait la réaction d'un homme du Kosovo répétant qu'il était nécessaire de prendre des mesures contre les derviches qui dévient, notamment dans la région de Prizren, Djakovica et Orahovac (au Kosovo), ne faisant pas le jeûne du Ramadan (mais le [jeûne de] *muharrem*), buvant de l'alcool, plaçant Ali au-dessus de Muhammed, ne faisant pas les cinq prières, mais en faisant une la nuit, etc. (cf. Bedri Šiljka, 'Povodom povratka tekija u islamsku zajednicu', *Preporod* xvii (457) (Sarajevo, 1er septembre 1989) 14). Ces accusations donnèrent lieu à une réponse de Fejzulah Hadžibajrić, 'Tesavvuf — jedan od bitnijih segmenata islamskog učenja', *Preporod* xix (459) (Sarajevo, 1er octobre 1989) 2. Sur un plan légèrement différent, on peut signaler ici les attaques d'un cheikh kadiri envers le Tarikatski centar de Sarajevo. Celui-ci était accusé de ne pas fonctionner de façon démocratique, de s'être séparé de la *Zidra* parce que ses membres avaient été "achetés" par la Communauté musulmane officielle. Ceux-ci étaient également accusés d'avoir été "achetés et serbisés" par l'Académie Serbe des Sciences et des Arts, du fait qu'ils avaient participé à un colloque scientifique organisé par celle-ci à Belgrade en 1989 (cf. Fočak, op. cit.).

⁴⁶ Notre connaissance de l'islam albanais devrait, dans les années qui viennent, être approfondie du fait des nouvelles possibilités de recherche dans le pays même, ce qui était impossible auparavant.

s'exprima chez les ulémas de Bosnie-Herzégovine. Si un tel courant, même mineur, a existé, force est de constater qu'il n'y en a pas eu d'écho dans les organes successifs de la Communauté musulmane officielle, *Zani i naltë* (La voix suprême, 1923-1939) et *Kultura islame* (La culture islamique, 1939-1945). Cette dernière revue, dont certains collaborateurs contribuèrent à la rédaction de la revue *Njeriu* (L'homme, 1942-1944) — organe de l'Association *Drita Hyjnore* (La lumière divine) réunissant à partir de 1936 les membre de quatre *tarikats*⁴⁷ —, contient même quelques textes et poésies soufis ou sur le soufisme. Pourquoi cette absence d'écrits polémiques? Quels sont les facteurs qui ont pu contribuer à cet état de fait?

Dans l'Albanie indépendante, qui n'acquies une relative stabilité qu'à partir de 1920, les différentes communautés religieuses s'organisèrent et se structurèrent au sein du nouvel État. Du côté musulman, une Communauté sunnite et une Communauté bektachie⁴⁸ se mirent en place. A partir de 1927, un courant réformiste se forma au sein de la Communauté sunnite. Or, il semble que ses représentants aient prit les rênes de la Communauté à l'issue du Congrès de 1929, aux dépens des cercles d'ulémas traditionalistes. Les nouveaux leaders non seulement s'avérèrent peu enclins à polémiquer avec les soufis, mais encore professèrent un islam légèrement teinté de soufisme. En témoignent l'adhésion à l'association soufie *Drita Hyjnore* de Sherif Putra, rédacteur de l'organe officiel de la Communauté musulmane *Kultura islame* ou de Haki Sharofi, professeur à la *medrese* de Tirana, ainsi que le contenu parfois très proche de l'organe précédemment cité et de la revue *Njeriu* édité par *Drita Hyjnore*.⁴⁹ Dans ce contexte, l'absence d'attaques "visibles" à l'encontre des *tarikats* pourrait aisément s'expliquer. Il n'est pas exclu cependant que, dans les milieux traditionalistes, implantés surtout dans la moitié nord du pays, des sentiments anti-confrériques aient existé à la même époque, sans

⁴⁷ Il s'agit de la Kadiriyye, de la Rifa'iyye, de la Sa'diyye et de la Tidjaniyye; cf. N. Clayer, *L'Albanie, pays des derviches* (Berlin-Wiesbaden 1990) 201-202.

⁴⁸ Sur la formation de la Communauté sunnite, cf. A. Popovic, *L'islam balkanique* (Berlin-Wiesbaden 1986) 11ss. Sur la formation de la Communauté bektachie, cf. N. Clayer, op. cit. et 'Bektachisme et nationalisme albanais', dans A. Popovic et G. Veinstein (éds), *Bektachiyya. Études sur l'ordre mystique des Bektachis et les groupes relevant de Hadji Bektach* (Istanbul 1995) 277-308.

⁴⁹ Cette question fait l'objet d'un article de N. Clayer, en préparation.

qu'ils n'aient pu s'exprimer au grand jour.

Au reste, on peut noter, venant même des autorités musulmanes en poste après 1929, une volonté de prendre des mesures à l'encontre des membres des confréries abusant la population. Ainsi, dans une circulaire du chef de la Communauté aux sous-muftis, datée du 23 octobre 1933, il était écrit:

'Souvent, nous avons constaté que beaucoup de gens prétendent cheikhs ou derviches vont de village en village prêcher et faire de la propagande auprès de la population pour attirer les gens dans leur "secte"; et avec maestria, ils dépouillent le pauvre peuple: aux uns, ils prennent de l'argent, aux autres du bétail, aux troisièmes la même chose sous forme de dons'.⁵⁰

Ces directives étaient d'ailleurs reprises un an plus tard par le Ministère de l'intérieur qui, s'adressant aux préfetures, indiquait:

'.... Nous avons été informés que de nombreux cheikhs et derviches de différentes "sectes" existent en Albanie, qui vont à travers les villes et les villages, font de la propagande auprès de la population et [disent] qu'ils guérissent toutes les maladies avec leurs écrits saints et qu'ils révèlent tous les autres secrets; comme rémunération pour leurs soi-disants efforts, ils reçoivent des gens pauvres des dons divers et ... continuent à dépouiller la couche ignorante de la population d'une manière fourbe'.⁵¹

C'est avec l'établissement du régime communiste que les confréries mystiques musulmanes subirent, en Albanie, les plus dures attaques, non pas de la part des autorités musulmanes, mais de la part des autorités politiques. Leur sort fut du reste comparable à celui des autres communautés religieuses, combattues dès 1944 et — fait exceptionnel dans le bloc de l'Est — totalement supprimées en 1967. La dialectique employée à cet effet fut essentiellement de "type communiste". Les cheikhs ou les *baba* étaient des "ennemis du peuple", "agents de l'impérialisme anglo-américains"; les confréries des vecteurs de "coutumes rétrogrades". L'étude de cette phase, qui ne fut pas anti-soufie mais anti-religieuse, sort donc du cadre de la présente étude.

Les changements politiques survenus depuis 1990 ont permis à la religion d'avoir de nouveau le droit de cité en Albanie. Les différentes communautés religieuses sont en train de se reconstituer. Il est encore trop tôt pour déterminer la place que chacune d'elles reprendra, et par conséquent quelles seront les rapports de force entre

⁵⁰ Archives d'Etat de Tirana, F. 882, v. 1933, d. 107, fl. 1.

⁵¹ Archives d'Etat de Tirana, F. 446, v. 1934, d. 222, fl. 1.

les différentes facettes — confrériques et non confrériques — de l'islam albanais du vingt-et-unième siècle.

Le premier constat que l'on peut faire à la suite de l'examen de ces deux cas est qu'il n'y a pas eu dans les Balkans, à l'époque post-ottomane, d'ouvrages en tout ou en partie consacrés à une polémique anti-soufie ou anti-confrérique. Les seules attaques de ce genre, plus anti-confrériques qu'anti-soufies, ont été publiées par des organes de Communautés musulmanes officielles. Le rôle des autorités musulmanes a donc été déterminant dans ce domaine. D'où l'opposition totale entre la situation yougoslave et la situation albanaise, puisque, dans le premier cas, s'instaura une prépondérance des ulémas de Bosnie-Herzégovine de tendance traditionaliste et anti-soufi, alors que, dans le second, la Communauté musulmane fut dirigée, à partir de 1929, par des ulémas réformistes, proches des milieux confrériques. Par conséquent, même si, tant en Yougoslavie qu'en Albanie, les autorités musulmanes cherchèrent, au sein des nouveaux Etats, à contrôler les *tarikats*, dans le premier cas, une opposition aux confréries put s'exprimer au grand jour, alors que, dans le second, une telle opposition — si elle exista — resta larvée.

Le courant anti-confrérique qui vit le jour en Yougoslavie vint donc, en premier lieu, des ulémas de Bosnie-Herzégovine. A la lumière de ce que l'on vient de voir, il connut globalement deux phases, qui ne correspondent pas tout à fait aux deux périodes historico-politiques 1918-1941 et 1944-1990. De fait, il paraît pertinent de distinguer une première phase, celle d'une "attaque systématique" qui fut menée contre les *tarikats* jusqu'à la fin des années soixante, puis une seconde phase, correspondant à une "attaque plus en nuances".

La première phase se caractérise par une volonté, de la part des autorités musulmanes officielles, de contrôler les *tarikats* et leurs biens. La question des *vakfs* devient centrale. En Bosnie-Herzégovine, c'est la Direction des *vakfs* qui s'est employée à fermer et transformer les établissements confrériques et les *türbe* (l'instauration du régime communiste a même permis aux autorités musulmanes de fermer tous les *tekke* en Bosnie-Herzégovine, en 1952). Pour la Macédoine et le Kosovo, les règlements émis par le Ulema-medžlis de Skoplje en 1934 stipulaient que les bâtiments et les biens des *tekke* étaient propriétés de la Communauté musulmane. Et M. Handžić de reprocher aux confréries de vivre des revenus des *vakfs* sans remplir

leurs devoirs qui auraient été d'éduquer les musulmans et de répandre la religion musulmane. Une autre critique prononcée par ce représentant de l'*ilmiyye* avait trait au fait que certains membres des confréries étaient hostiles "à la *medrese*", c'est-à-dire au milieu des ulémas auxquels ils ne s'adressaient pas pour régler les questions religieuses. D'après M. Handžić, c'était donc l'autorité, voire le contrôle des autorités musulmanes qui étaient rejetés. Toutes les autres accusations portées alors contre les confréries (non respect de la Chariat, culte des saints, pratiques et croyances non islamiques, absorption d'alcool, etc.) paraissaient sinon secondaires, au moins servant à justifier la nécessité d'un contrôle. Même si ce type d'attaques concernait plus particulièrement des confréries comme celle des Bektachis, ou d'autres pratiquant des mortifications rituelles pendant le *zīkr*, une distinction entre "confrérisme déviant" et "confrérisme non-déviant" n'était pas encore faite de façon nette comme au cours de la phase suivante.

A l'origine de cette seconde phase, qui commença au début des années soixante-dix, s'est trouvé le renouveau des confréries au Kosovo — sous l'impulsion du cheikh Džemali —, entraînant également un renouveau confrérique dans les autres régions du pays. La Communauté musulmane était alors dans une situation délicate; après une génération de régime communiste, la religiosité des musulmans avait considérablement baissé. Le renouveau confrérique pouvait donc, à condition d'être maîtrisé, offrir une dynamique permettant de "refidéliser" une partie de la population musulmane. C'est vraisemblablement dans cette optique que les autorités musulmanes se mirent à prôner alors une alliance entre "derviches modérés" et ulémas, contre les "derviches extrémistes". L'expression "derviches extrémistes" s'appliquaient en particulier à Šejh Džemali et à ses partisans, qui avaient formé une Association des ordres de derviches, transformée en 1977 en Communauté des ordres de derviches, s'élevant ainsi en concurrents directs de la Communauté musulmane officielle. La puissance grandissante de Šejh Džemali — fort de l'appui financier de milliers de travailleurs émigrés — dans les milieux albanais mais aussi gitans, dérangeait et inquiétait la Communauté musulmane. Celle-ci ne ménagea donc pas ses attaques contre les "déviances" de ce type de derviches, alors qu'elle mettait en avant, dans les pages de ses organes, la possibilité de pratiquer un "soufisme nettoyé des innovations non islamiques", compatible avec la Chariat, au sein d'ordre de derviches, dont le statut au sein de la

Communauté musulmane devait être précisé. D'où la création du Tarikatski centar (Centre des *tarikats*) à Sarajevo, sous l'égide des autorités musulmanes.

Cette analyse des courants anti-confrériques dans les Balkans entre 1918 et 1990 ne doit pas faire croire à des dichotomies qui n'ont jamais existé, aussi bien en Yougoslavie qu'en Albanie. Durant cette période, l'islam de Bosnie-Herzégovine n'a pas été uniquement anti-soufi; celui de Kosovo, de Macédoine ou d'Albanie n'a pas été uniquement soufi. En outre, en ne prenant en compte — par obligation — que les courants qui se sont exprimés ouvertement, nous avons peut-être laissé dans l'ombre d'autres courants qui ont pu exister plus localement et qui pourraient commencer à se manifester dans le nouveau contexte balkanique chez certains ulémas de Macédoine et du Kosovo, ou du Nord de l'Albanie.

VII

THE MALAY-INDONESIAN WORLD

OPPOSITION TO SUFISM IN THE EAST INDIES IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

AZYUMARDI AZRA

Sufism has often been associated with the spread of Islam in the East Indies — or more conveniently the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago — particularly after the thirteenth century. Some scholars maintain that wandering Sufi shaykhs who came from certain parts of the Middle East played a crucial role in the large scale conversion of the local population to Islam from that period onwards. The Sufis' ability to present Islam in an attractive fashion, principally by emphasizing continuity rather than change in local traditional beliefs and practices, is often identified as one of the major factors accounting for conversion. This implies that the brand of Islam that spread in the region during its early period in the Archipelago was that of syncretistic Sufism which was not in all respects in accordance with the teachings of the sharia.

Muslims in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago manifested some preoccupation with mystico-philosophical and theological ideas. In Aceh, for instance, public discussion and debates on Islamic mysticism were held in the Grand Mosque of the Sultanate. Al-Rānīrī in his *Bustān al-salātīn* relates how these debates resulted in deadlock. Such debates on mystico-philosophical matters, and particularly concerning the permanent archetypes (*al-aʿyān al-thābita*), were conducted between two scholars, Muḥammad al-Yamanī and Abū'l-Khayr b. Shaykh b. Ḥajar, who both came to Aceh from Mecca in 947/1540. Al-Yamanī was an expert on *fiqh*, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *ʿulūm al-ḥadīth*, and sciences related to the Koran. Abū'l-Khayr was the author of a book entitled *al-Sayf al-qāṭi*^c, which apparently deals with intricate mystico-philosophical issues concerning the nature of

the third metaphysical category between being and non-being: the fixed essences, or the permanent archetypes. He taught *fiqh*, and also discussed metaphysical matters which were very difficult for the common people to grasp. The heated discussion between both scholars concerned mystico-philosophical topics in particular. It left people in religious confusion but intellectually curious to explore these topics.¹

As a result, when al-Rānirī's uncle, Muḥammad Jaylanī b. Ḥasan Muḥammad al-Ḥumaydī, came from Gujarat to Aceh between 988/1580 and 991/1583, people were not interested in studying *fiqh*, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *akhlāq*, *manṭiq*, and rhetoric as he had proposed to them. Instead, they demanded that he teach *taṣawwuf* and *kalām*, subjects which he himself had not fully mastered. Thus, he decided to end his teaching and went to Mecca to pursue more advanced studies in Islamic mysticism and other related subjects. Having mastered these, he returned to Aceh during the reign of Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Riʿāyat Shāh to teach these subjects.²

In Java, often regarded as a land where syncretistic mystical Islam held sway, the preoccupation with Islamic mysticism was apparently stronger than in Aceh. Tome Pires, who travelled in Java in the early sixteenth century, reports that he observed numerous wandering *tapas* (ascetics) who 'are also worshipped by the Moors, and they believe in them greatly... they say they are sacred'.³

The fascination with mysticism in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago was not confined to the Muslim masses. Malay rulers were also fascinated by Muslim mystical concepts, in particular that of *al-insān al-kāmil*. They often implied that they had attained the status of *insān kāmīl*, by adopting Sufi terms such as *walī Allāh* or *qutb*.⁴

There is little doubt that the spread of such mystical concepts and teachings was in one way or another stimulated by the circulation of certain mystical literature in the Malay-Indonesian world. Pigeaud, for instance, reports the existence in Java of mystical Islamic works

¹ Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānirī, *Bustanu's Salatin*, Bab ii, Fasal 13, ed. T. Iskandar (Kuala Lumpur 1966) 33.

² Ibid. 23-4.

³ Tome Pires, *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires*, ed. & trans. Armando Cortesao (London 1994) 177.

⁴ A.C. Milner, 'Islam and the Muslim State', in M.B. Hooker (ed.), *Islam in South-East Asia* (Leiden 1983) 41-4; Martin van Bruinessen, 'The Origin and Development of Sūfī Orders (Tarekat) in Indonesia', *Studia Islamika; Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* i (1994) 4-5.

from the fifteenth century onwards.⁵ As one would expect, such literature appealed to many Javanese Muslims, since it contained mystical teachings which were similar to those prevailing in pre-Islamic times. These mystical works, considered by some to be heterodox, were criticized by more sharia-oriented writers, as we will see later.

It is of special importance to note that the spread of mystical literature with its impacts on religious life in the Malay-Indonesian world is vividly recorded in Arabic sources. Among this literature is a succinct work by Faḍl Allāh al-Burhānpūrī, entitled *al-Tuḥfat al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī* which was supplemented by a short commentary called *al-Ḥaqīqa al-muwāfiqa li-ahl al-sharīʿa*. In *al-Tuḥfa al-mursala*, al-Burhānpūrī essentially attempts to restrain an extravagant type of Sufism by emphasizing the essential elements of Islam such as the Absolute Being (*wujūd*) of God and the importance of the sharia for the mystic path.⁶ However, the author's basic concepts, such as the seven grades of being (Malay: *martabat tujuh*), and his arguments to explain them, are absolutely philosophical. These arguments could obscure the real intention of the author, especially for common believers.

Al-Tuḥfa al-mursala, which was written in 1000/1590, was already known in the Malay-Indonesian world in 1030/1619 or even earlier, and was also translated into Javanese. The effect of this book on religious life in the Archipelago was recorded by Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (d. 1101/1690) and by his disciple Muṣṭafā Faṭḥ Allāh al-Ḥamawī. In the account of Faḍl Allāh al-Burhānpūrī in his unpublished three-volume biographical dictionary called *Fawā'id al-irtihāl wa-natā'ij al-safar*, al-Ḥamawī relates that:

'Our Shaykh, *khātimat al-muḥaqqiqīn*, Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī, told me, while we were reading *al-Tuḥfat al-mursala* with him, that some of our Jāwī companions (*ba'd aṣḥābinā al-jāwīyyīn*) informed him that this treatise and matters it treats are popular and famous in their land and that it is read by their religious scholars, and that youths study it as one of the minor treatises in the early stages of their studies'.⁷

Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī himself in introductory notes to his *Ithāf al-dhakī bi-sharḥ al-Tuḥfat al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī*, written as a response to al-Burhānpūrī's work, provides additional data on this

⁵ G.Th. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java*, iii vols. (Leiden 1967) i, 76-83.

⁶ A.H. Johns (ed. & tr.), *The Gift Addressed to the Spirit of the Prophet* (Canberra 1965) 5-7.

⁷ Muṣṭafā Faṭḥ Allāh al-Ḥamawī, *Fawā'id al-irtihāl wa-natā'ij al-safar fī akhbar ahl al-qarn al-ḥādī 'ashar*, iii vols. (MS. Dār al-kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1093 Ta'rīkh, n.d.) i, fol. 167.

matter:

'We have been reliably informed by a group (*jamā'a*) of Jāwīyyīn that some books on *ḥaqīqa* [Divine Realities] and esoteric knowledge (*'ulūm al-asrār*) have spread among the population of the lands of *Jāwa* being passed from hand to hand by those endowed with knowledge based on their studies and the teaching of others, but who have neither understanding of the *'ilm al-sharī'a* of the Prophet, the Chosen, the Elect of God, peace be upon him, nor the *'ilm al-ḥaqā'iq* conferred on those who follow the path of God the Exalted, those who are close to Him, those admirable ones, or those who have set their foot on any path of their paths based on the Koran and the Sunna through perfect obedience both outwardly (*al-zāhir*) and inwardly (*al-bāṭin*), as rendered by the devout and pure. This is the reason why many of them (the Jāwīyyīn) have deviated from the right path and why impure belief has arisen; in fact they have entered into the crooked camp of atheism (*al-zandaqa*) and heresy (*al-ilḥād*)...

I have been told [by the Jāwīyyīn] that among the famous books is the compendium entitled *al-Tuḥfa al-mursala ilā [rūḥ] al-nabī*, peace be upon him, written by the divinely assisted adept Shaykh Muḥammad b. Shaykh Faḍl Allāh al-Burhānpūrī, may God almighty cause him to be of service'.⁸

This Arabic account makes clear that there had been religious confusion among the 'Jāwīyyīn' in the lands of 'Jāwa', i.e. among people in the whole of the Malay-Indonesian world, as a result of their following the mystic path without proper understanding and conformity to the sharia, both outwardly and inwardly. This state of affairs raises questions concerning the degree to which the sharia had actually spread in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago.

Despite the fascination of Malay-Indonesian Muslims for Islamic mysticism, it would be wrong to assume that the basic injunctions of the sharia were unknown among Muslims in the region. Some early traditional literature written in the Archipelago such as '*sejarah*' ('history'), '*hikayat*' (annals), *undang-undang* ('local laws and regulations') and the like, incorporated *shar'ī* teachings into their discourse. Such literature also included accounts of how, for instance, the Muslim rulers in this region made various attempts to apply the teachings of the sharia in their realm. For example, Sultan al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ (d. 697-8/1297) of the Pasai Sultanate on his deathbed whispered as his last wish to his viziers, ministers, chiefs and court officials that they should enforce the law of the Koran and prevent anything which contravened the holy law.⁹

⁸ Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī, *Iṭḥāf al-dhakī bi-sharḥ al-tuḥfa al-mursala ilā rūḥ al-nabī* (MS. Dār al-kutub al-Miṣriyya, 2578 *taṣawwuf*, microfilm 27651, n.d.) fol. 2.

⁹ A.H. Hill (ed. & trans.), 'Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai', *Journal of the Malay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (= *JMBRAS*) xxxiii (1960) 65.

Sultan al-Malik al-Maḥmūd (d. 727/1326) when he was very sick and felt that he would soon be leaving this life, also gave similar orders to his son Sultan Aḥmad:

'My son, light of my eyes and fruit of my heart, take care that while you are ruler you fulfill all the commandments communicated to you by God and His Prophet, and that you eschew the things which they have forbidden. Do not transgress the commandments of God the Exalted or the sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad... Conduct yourself in such a way that you are always on guard against the things which are not in accordance with the Holy Law'.¹⁰

Like their Pasai counterparts, the rulers of Melaka, another great Muslim kingdom in the region, attempted to build their state in accordance with God's law. The *Hikayat Melayu*, for instance, relates how Sultan Maṣṣūr Shāh (r. 862/1477) advised his son, Sultan °Alā° al-Dīn Shāh, to govern the state according to the rule of God.¹¹ The injunction that Melaka should be governed in accordance with Koranic law is also found in the *Undang-undang Melaka*.¹²

The *Undang-undang Melaka*, considered to be the earliest extant Malay law digest, contains explicit Islamic materials in addition to indigenous *adat*. The Islamic materials derive mainly from the doctrine of the Shāfi°i *madhhab*. In fact, certain sections of the Malaka Digest are simply translations of Shāfi°i standard texts such as *al-Fath al-qarīb* of Ibn Shujā°. ¹³

Another law digest, the sixteenth/seventeenth-century Pahang Digest is also a good example of how some teachings of the sharia were known to Southeast Asian Muslims. This digest, compiled for the Pahang Sultan °Abd al-Ghafūr Muḥyī al-Dīn Shāh (r. 1001-23/1592-1614), is strongly colored by Islam. No fewer than forty-two of the sixty-eight articles of this text are near-literal translations of certain Shāfi°i texts.¹⁴ The Digest requires that the Pahang Sultanate be governed by its rulers in accordance with Islamic law.¹⁵

In the Acehese Sultanate, a great successor to Melaka, one also finds the adoption of sharia precepts. Several Acehese texts (*sarakata*) contain numerous Islamic principles in addition to indigenous *adat*. The two principal collections of texts, known as the *Adat Aceh* and *Makota Alam*, are traditionally believed to have been

¹⁰ Ibid. 73, 133-4.

¹¹ C.C. Brown (trans.), *Sejarah Melayu or Malay Annals* (Kuala Lumpur 1970) 103.

¹² Liaw Yock Fang, *Undang-undang Melaka* (The Hague 1976) 163.

¹³ M.B. Hooker, *Islamic Law in South-East Asia* (Singapore 1984) 15-6.

¹⁴ J.E. Kempe & R.O. Winstedt, 'A Malay Legal Digest Compiled for °Abd al-Ghafūr Muḥaiyuddīn Shāh, Sultān of Pahang', *JMBRAS* xxi (1948) 2.

¹⁵ Ibid. 24-5.

compiled during the reign of the famous Sultan Iskandar Muda (r. 1016-45/1607-36). A third collection is known as *Adat Majlis*. This collection in particular contains a considerable portion of Islamic principles concerning the application of Islamic prescriptions to Aceh's politics. It also provides an elaborate description of the etiquette and ceremonies practiced in accordance with Islamic principles when the sultans visited the mosques during Ramaḍān, the month of fasting.

The *Adat Majlis*, however, is primarily a set of idealized guidelines for the sultans and dignitaries of the Acehnese Sultanate concerning their religio-political conduct. Considerable attention is paid to the Sufi interpretation of certain terms related to the ruler. In this connection Milner concluded that the sharia only played a limited role in Aceh. In support of his conclusion, he cites two cases of unlawful acts which were not dealt with according to Islamic law.¹⁶

However, some sultans of Aceh did attempt to enforce the application of the sharia in the Sultanate. The greatest ruler of the Acehnese, Sultan Iskandar Muda, for instance, even sought to transform the Sultanate into a theocratic state.¹⁷ He upgraded the religious court to the same level as civil, criminal and business courts, created the office of *qāḍī* as an important high position in the administration of the Sultanate, and imposed Islamic penalties in place of traditional ones. In addition, he initiated the establishment of the *Bayt al-māl*, the State Treasury, according to *fiqh* precepts, issued orders to the population to perform *'ibāda*, and prohibited the practice of usury.

Despite all these indications, it is doubtful that the precepts of the sharia were universally observed by the wider population. Certainly, it is known that the application of Islamic law varied from one area of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago to another. In any case, no *fiqh* books, indispensable as manuals for Muslims' religious and social life, appear to have existed before the seventeenth century in the Malay-Indonesian languages.¹⁸

As suggested above, the Malay-Indonesian Muslims' fascination with mystical ideas and teachings remained largely unchecked at least until the end of the fourteenth century. Some scholars maintain

¹⁶ Milner, op. cit. 28.

¹⁷ S.M.N. al-Attas, *Rānīrī and the Wujūdiyya of 17th-Century Aceh* (Singapore 1966) 10.

¹⁸ Hooker, op. cit. 15-16; Azyumardi Azra, 'Education, Law, Mysticism: Constructing Social Realities', in Mohammad Taib Osman (ed.), *Islamic Civilization in the Malay World* (Kuala Lumpur-Istanbul 1997) 143-95, 178-95.

that the earliest opposition to mystical-syncretistic Islam is to be found in Java. Pigeaud has pointed out that since the fifteenth century an Islamic literature, produced by a small number of Javanese, strongly criticized a group of works which emphasized a mystic interpretation of Islam.¹⁹

One of the tracts in this category was studied by Drewes, who claimed, however, that it was the earliest known Islamic work written in Java. In fact, this work is a polemical treatise against what its author believed to be heterodox teachings.²⁰ Citing leading sharia-oriented scholars such as al-Ghazālī, the tract vehemently attacks Muslims who maintain superstitious beliefs and practices, and it warns its readers against the excessive veneration of Sufi masters:

'It is unbelief to say that the great masters are superior to the prophets, or to put the saints above the prophets, and even above our lord Muḥammad'.²¹

Moreover, the text stresses the sharia when it states:

'How does one put into effect God's high commandments which apply to every Muslim without exception? Outward works are: to pray five times every day, to fast in the month of Ramaḍān, to pay the alms-tax according to one's property... A Muslim should not trade with forbidden goods... He should practice charity; perform the pilgrimage; take part in the holy war; observe ritual purity; recite the Koran;... avoid all kinds of baleful sins and take part in the corporate Friday prayer in the mosque'.²²

The text then goes on to list numerous religious obligations and prohibitions which should be observed by Muslims in their daily lives. The contents of this text clearly indicate that scriptural orthodoxy had started to penetrate Javanese Muslim society.

Strong opposition to Islamic mysticism in Java is reflected in the account of *Wali Sanga* (the Nine Saints), i.e. the legendary first preachers of Islam in Java in the fifteenth century, who collectively condemned to death Shaykh Siti Jenar, also known as Shaykh Lemah Abang. Siti Jenar, regarded by some as an important missionary of Islam in Java, was accused of adhering to heterodox mystic doctrines which centered on recognition that man is identical with God as the Absolute Reality. In other words, Siti Jenar claimed that he was divine because he had united with God. He also revealed the secrets of the esoteric knowledge to mystically unqualified people.²³

¹⁹ Pigeaud, op. cit. i, 76-83.

²⁰ G.W.J. Drewes, *An Early Javanese Code of Muslim Ethics*, (The Hague 1978).

²¹ Ibid. 39.

²² Ibid. 17-9.

²³ S. Soebardi, 'Santri-Religious Elements as Reflected in the Book of Tjentinī', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (=BKI)* cxxvii (1971) 331-49; 347; Widji

In consequence, Siti Jenar was summoned to the assembly of *Wali Sanga*. Reportedly, when he was asked by one of them, Sunan Giri, why he never attended the Friday prayers as required by the sharia, he answered that in reality there was no such thing as Friday, indeed there was no mosque, for only God exists, i.e. nothing exists but God.²⁴ Having heard Siti Jenar's statements, the assembly of *Wali Sanga* decided that he was a heretic and had him put to death by the sword. The teachings and eventual execution of Siti Jenar remind one of al-Ḥallāj and his famous utterance '*anā'l-ḥaqq*' which led to his execution in 922. Thus, Soebardi may be right when he argues that Siti Jenar was in fact a Javanese al-Ḥallāj.²⁵

The case of Siti Jenar was not an isolated one in the history of the opposition to what was regarded as 'unorthodox' or 'heterodox' Muslim mysticism during the early period in Java. Sunan Pangung, associated with the Muslim kingdom of Demak, which flourished in the sixteenth century, was burned to death because he had allegedly violated the sharia in favor of mysticism. Another mystic, Shaykh Among Raga, was sentenced to death by Sultan Agung of the Mataram Sultanate for propagating a heterodox mystical doctrine and violating the sharia.²⁶

The rise of a more articulate philosophical mysticism in the Archipelago owed much to two great scholars of the first half of the seventeenth century, Ḥamza al-Fansūrī (exact dates of his birth and death are unknown) and his disciple, Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī (d. 1040/1630). Both were Sufi thinkers *par excellence*. They prospered, intellectually and socially, in the Aceh Sultanate where they occupied the highest religious posts under the Sultan himself.

From al-Fansūrī's mystical poems it may be inferred that he was a peripatetic Sufi who visited some important centers of Islamic learning in the Middle East, including Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem. In Baghdad he was initiated into the Qādiriyya *ṭarīqa*, before returning to Aceh. As a writer, he produced not only religious treatises but also prose works full of mystical ideas. Like his master, al-Sumatrānī was a Sufi thinker who had command of several languages. He wrote works in Malay and Arabic, which deal mainly with *kalām* and

Saksono, *Mengislamkan Tanah Jawa: Telaah atas Metode Dakwa Wali Songo* (Bandung 1995) 46-66; Drewes, *An Early Javanese Code* 45-9.

²⁴ Soebardi, op. cit. 347; Saksono 347-52.

²⁵ S. Soebardi, *The Book of Cebolek* (The Hague 1975) 35; Saksono, op. cit. 58-61.

²⁶ Ibid. 36-40.

Sufism.²⁷

Al-Fansūrī and al-Sumatrānī have been categorized by some scholars of Indonesian Islam as belonging to the same stream of religious mystical thought. These two men were the leading proponents of the *waḥdat al-wujūd* tradition in Sufism. Thus, they were deeply influenced by Ibn ʿArabī and al-Jīlī, and had fully accepted the elaborate system of *waḥdat al-wujūd* developed by these thinkers. Accordingly, al-Fansūrī and al-Sumatrānī, in line with Neo-Platonic thought, explain the universe in terms of a series of emanations and consider each of the emanations to be aspects of God Himself.²⁸

These ideas led their opponents to accuse them and their followers of being pantheists and, therefore, of having gone astray. Modern scholars such as Winstedt,²⁹ Johns,³⁰ Van Nieuwenhuijze,³¹ and Baried³² look upon the teachings and doctrines of al-Fansūrī and al-Sumatrānī as having been 'heretical' or 'heterodox'. Thus, by implication, they themselves were held to be 'heretic' or 'heterodox' mystics as opposed to the 'orthodox' Sufis, a category exemplified by such Sufis as al-Rānīrī and al-Sinkilī, and discussed below.

However, al-Fansūrī and al-Sumatrānī also emphasized the importance of the sharia for the mystic path, and maintained that interdependence characterizes the stages of mystical experience. In this connection, al-Fansūrī writes in his *Sharāb al-ʿāshiqīn*:

'He who fences himself with the *sharīʿa* will never be tempted by the devil. Whoever leaves this enclosure of the *sharīʿa* will certainly be tempted by the devil. Whoever thinks that the *sharīʿa* is of little importance, or whoever despises it, he becomes an infidel — we take refuge in God from him — because the *sharīʿa* is not distinct from the *ṭarīqa*; the *ṭarīqa* is not distinct from the *maʿrifa*: it is like unto a boat; the *sharīʿa* is the keel, the *ṭarīqa* is the deck, the *ḥaqīqa* is the cargo, and *maʿrifa* is the profit. If the keel is thrown away, the ship will certainly sink, and if the boat sinks, the merchandise and its capital are irretrievably lost, and according to the

²⁷ S.M.N. al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Ḥamza Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur 1970) 3-13, 233-253; C.A.O. Van Nieuwenhuijze, *Samsu'l-Din van Pasai: Bijdrage tot de Kennis der Sumatraansche Mystiek* (Leiden 1945) 25-6; Abdul Aziz Dahlan, *Tasawuf Syamsuddin Sumatrani* (Ph.D. Diss, IAIN Jakarta 1992) 37-42.

²⁸ Al-Attas, *Rānīrī* 43-7; A.H. Johns, 'Aspects of Sufi Thought in India and Indonesia in the First Half of the 17th Century', *JMBRAS* xxviii (1955) 70-77.

²⁹ R.O. Winstedt, 'Some Malay Mystics, Heretical and Orthodox', *JMBRAS* vii (1923) 312-8.

³⁰ Johns, 'Aspects' 73-5.

³¹ Van Nieuwenhuijze, op. cit. 329.

³² Baroroh Baried, 'Perkembangan Ilmu Tasawwuf di Indonesia', in S. Sutrisno (ed.), *Bahasa, Sastra, Budaya* (Yogyakarta 1985) 290-8.

law this is harmful'.³³

This passage demonstrates that al-Fansūrī was not unlike orthodox Sufis who insisted upon the supremacy of the sharia in Muslim mystical practice. This was also the position of his disciple al-Sumatrānī. Yet, they have been viewed mostly as Wujūdiyya Sufis, i.e. as subscribing to pantheistic ideas of God, emphasizing the immanence of God in His creation rather than His transcendence. Since most of their writings deal with philosophical mysticism, and not with *fiqh* or the sharia, it is understandable that they were known primarily as the most prominent proponents of the Wujūdiyya brand of Sufism.

It is generally assumed that mystical Islam, particularly that of the Wujūdiyya orientation of al-Fansūrī and al-Sumatrānī, held sway not only in Aceh but in many other parts of the Archipelago. Attempts to apply the precepts of the sharia in the lives of Muslims have been recorded, but mystical doctrine and practice continued to enjoy supremacy.

Some of the harshest criticism of the Wujūdiyya school of Sufism was formulated by Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. °Alī b. Ḥasanjī al-Ḥumaydī al-°Aydārūsī, better known as al-Rānīrī (d. 1068/1658). Born in Rānīr (modern Randir, an old harbor on the Gujarat coast) of a Ḥaḍramī father, al-Rānīrī is generally regarded as a Malay-Indonesian °ālim rather than an Indian or Arab °ālim. This is not hard to understand, since his mother, it has been suggested, was a Malay; and, more importantly, he reached the peak of his career in Aceh, i.e. in the Malay-Indonesian world.³⁴ Al-Rānīrī acquired his early education in Rānīr, and later, like most children of Ḥaḍramī immigrants, continued his studies in Ḥaḍramawt. In 1030/1620 or 1031/1621, when he performed the *ḥajj*, he most probably came into contact with Jāwī students and pilgrims in the Ḥaramayn, before returning to Gujarat.³⁵

The most important teacher of al-Rānīrī in India was Abū Ḥafṣ °Umar b. °Abd Allāh Bā Shaybān al-Ṭarīmī al-Ḥaḍramī (d. 1066/1656), who was also known as Sayyid °Umar al-°Aydārūs in the Gujarat region.³⁶ Al-Rānīrī, who had already been initiated into

³³ Soebardi, op. cit. 343.

³⁴ Al-Attas, *Rānīrī* 12; cf. °Abd al-Ḥayy b. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir fī bahjat al-masāmi° wa°l-nawāzīr*, vii vols. (Hyderabad 1931-59) v, 347-350.

³⁵ Al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzha* v, 349; P. Voorhoeve, 'Van en over Nuruddin ar-Raniri', *BKI* cvii (1951) 357.

³⁶ Al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzha* v, 350; cf. Muḥammad Amīn al-Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-athar fī*

the °Aydarūsiyya and Qādiriyya orders, was then initiated into the Rifa°iyya *ṭarīqa* by Bā Shaybān.³⁷

Al-Rānīrī came to Aceh in 1047/1631, where he was appointed by Sultan Iskandar II (1637-41) to the highest religious position, probably *shaykh al-Islām*, which ranked immediately below the Sultan himself. It is not clear whether he also occupied the office of *Kadi Malikon Adil*, i.e. the office of *qāḍī* of the Sultanate which was instituted by Sultan Iskandar Muda.

After he had gained a firm foothold at the Court of the Acehnese Sultanate, al-Rānīrī soon began to express his strong opposition to Wujūdiyya Sufism. In his view, Islam in this region had been corrupted by the misunderstanding of Sufi doctrine. Concerning *waḥdat al-wujūd*, al-Rānīrī distinguishes *wujūdiyya mulḥid* (atheistic unity of being) which is false Sufism, and *wujūdiyya muwahḥid* (unitarian unity of being) which is correct and true Sufism. In some of his works al-Rānīrī, who was a prolific writer, vigorously accused the followers of *wujūdiyya mulḥid* of heresy and even of belief in polytheism. Consequently, they could be condemned to death if they refused to repent.³⁸

Furthermore, he challenged the protagonists of the *wujūdiyya mulḥid* to debate these matters. The debates, which were held at the court of the Sultanate in the presence of the Sultan, were fierce and lasted for several days, but they failed to resolve the differences. Sultan Iskandar II, apparently under the influence of al-Rānīrī, ordered the followers of *wujūdiyya mulḥid*, repeatedly but in vain, to change their mind and repent before God for their unbelief. Al-Rānīrī himself has described the final outcome of the episode as follows:

‘...again they say: “*al-°ālam huwa Allāh, huwa al-°ālam* — the universe is God and He is the universe.” After that the King orders them to repent for their wrong belief. He appeals several times, yet they are not willing (to change their mind); they even fight the messengers of the King. Finally the King orders them all to be killed, and their books to be gathered and burned in the field in front of the Bayt al-Raḥmān Mosque’.³⁹

Al-Rānīrī remained in power for about seven years, during which

a°yān al-qarn al-ḥādī °ashar, iv vols. (Cairo 1868; repr. Beirut) iii, 214-5.

³⁷ Azyumardi Azra, *The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian °Ulamā° in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Ph.D. Diss., Columbia University, New York 1992) 355.

³⁸ P. Voorhoeve, ‘Lijst der geschriften van Raniri’, *BKI* cxi (1955) 152-161.

³⁹ Cited in Ahmad Daudi, *Alla dan Manusia dalam Konsep Nuruddin ar-Raniri* (Jakarta 1993) 41.

time the followers of *wujūdiyya mulḥid* were persecuted. He was able to retain favour at the Acehnese court until 1054/1644 when he suddenly departed for the town of his birth, Rānīr. It is ironic, however, that his departure was caused by the return to Aceh of a Minangkabau scholar named Sayf al-Rijāl from Surat, India. Sayf al-Rijāl had previously been banished from Aceh after the arrival of al-Rānīrī because of his allegedly unorthodox Wujūdiyya views. Now he challenged al-Rānīrī, which gave rise to endless debates between them. When Sayf al-Rijāl gained influence he was summoned to the court and accorded honorary treatment, whereas al-Rānīrī, who lost his position, was forced to withdraw from the arena.

Drewes correctly points out that al-Rānīrī's radical opposition to the teachings of al-Fansūrī, al-Sumatrānī, and their followers was not an isolated case of 'orthodox' reaction to 'unorthodox' mysticism. Al-Rānīrī's sojourn in Aceh occurred during the period when the doctrines of Wujūdiyya met with serious theological opposition or were being reinterpreted by many scholars in a more restrained manner in conformity with the sharia.

Al-Rānīrī's affiliation, particularly with the °Aydarūsiyya *ṭarīqa*, seems to have been a crucial factor which contributed to his radical tendencies. The °Aydarūsiyya *ṭarīqa*, with its strong Arabian roots, supported mainly by the °Aydarūs scholars who were generally very sharia-oriented, has been known as one of the most orthodox *ṭarīqas*. It persistently emphasized harmony between the mystical way and total obedience to the sharia. It is also noted for its non-ascetic and activist attitude.

Looking at al-Rānīrī's intellectual and spiritual milieu, there is little doubt that he was an orthodox Sufi. He insisted on God's transcendence and emphasized the importance of the sharia in mystical practices. His *al-Ṣirāṭ al-mustaḳīm* reflects his general concerns with the pre-eminence of the sharia. Since this was the first book on *fiqh* written in Malay, it became a kind of standard manual on Muslims basic religious duties, although it was no more than a simple exposition of basic rules.⁴⁰ This is not to say that the precepts of the sharia or *fiqh* were not already known and practiced to some extent by Malay-Indonesian Muslims. The book was important because no other sizeable reference work in the vernacular language existed at this time when syncretistic and extravagant Sufism was prevalent in

40 Azra, 'The Transmission' 368-9; id., 'Education' 190-1.

the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago.⁴¹

No less important were al-Rānīrī's polemical works against what he regarded as the 'heretical' Wujūdiyya. In fact, he was the first in the Archipelago to differentiate between true and false interpretation and understanding of Sufi doctrine and practice. In his book *Tibyān fī maʿrifat al-adyān*, for instance, he dwells on seventy-two Muslim groups considered to be heretical or outside the true Sunni tradition. As one might expect, he includes the followers of al-Fansūrī and al-Sumatrānī among the heretics.⁴²

Thus, al-Rānīrī was very bitter towards the followers of *wujūdiyya mulhid*. His persecution of them had a lasting impact on Islamic intellectual and religious life in the Archipelago, and entailed a reassessment among the ulama and first and foremost by al-Sinkili (see below), of such key concepts as *muslim*, *kāfir*, and *tasāmuḥ*. His fatwa on *kufṛ* and the killing of the Wujūdiyya Muslims reached the Ḥaramayn; and an anonymous manuscript written in 1086/1675 relates that the fatwa was the writer's answer to questions arising from an island of the Jāwa region (*min baʿḍ jazāʾir Jāwa*).⁴³ The problem put forward was that an *ʿālim* from 'above the wind' accused a Wujūdiyya Sufi of being a *kāfir*. The case was brought to the attention of the Sultan. The *ʿālim* demanded that the Sufi repent, but he refused. The Sufi maintained that he could not repent because his explanation had not been properly understood. But no one took his words seriously, and finally the Sultan issued an order to have him executed together with all the people who followed his teachings. All of them were burnt to death. But was it permissible to do this?

The author of the treatise points out the danger of arguing with people who cannot comprehend the matter at hand. However, the Sufi's statements that he was not properly understood indicate that he followed certain intricate interpretations of a particular religious doctrine which he himself was not able to explicate to the *ʿālim*, who had already labelled him an unbeliever. Whatever the case may be, the author of the treatise points out that it was terribly wrong to kill him and his followers. He adds that the accusation was obviously based on a literal understanding of Wujūdiyya doctrine. Yet, this attitude was not permissible in Islam, since the Prophet said that any statement of a Muslim should not be considered wrong as long as

⁴¹ Hooker, op. cit. 15-16; Azra, op. cit. 179-180; Fang, op. cit. 64-5.

⁴² Azra, 'The Transmission' 378-9; Al-Attas, *Rānīrī* 26-30.

⁴³ MS. Leiden Or. 2467, untitled, fols. 12-3.

others were able to interpret it differently.

Voorhoeve suggests that the author of the anonymous treatise may be Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī, whose response to al-Burhānpūrī's *al-Tuhfa al-mursala* was mentioned above.⁴⁴ The 'ālim from 'above the wind' was al-Rānīrī; the sultan was Iskandar II and the person who brought the matter to al-Kūrānī's attention was his student, 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkilī. Al-Sinkilī apparently could not accept the way al-Rānīrī expressed his opposition towards the so-called *wujūdiyya mulhid*.

'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkilī (1024-1105/1615-93), better known as 'Abdul Rauf Singkel or al-Singkilī, was another major Malay-Indonesian scholar in the seventeenth century who played a significant role in the gradual emergence of a more sharia-oriented Sufism in the Archipelago. Al-Sinkilī, departed for Arabia around 1052/1642, when Aceh, his homeland, was affected by controversies and struggles between al-Rānīrī and the followers of Wujūdiyya doctrine. In his work, *'Umdat al-muhtājīn ilā sulūk maslak al-mufradīn*, he mentions that he studied in a number of places, scattered along the *hajj* routes, in Doha in the Persian Gulf region, in Yemen, in Jedda and finally in Mecca and Medina. He lists nineteen teachers with whom he studied various branches of Islamic learning, and twenty-seven other ulama with whom he had personal contact and relations. Two of these teachers were Aḥmad al-Qushāshī (d. 1071/1661) and . With al-Qushāshī, al-Sinkilī mostly studied what he calls *'ilm al-bāṭin*, *taṣawwuf* and related sciences. His studies of the mystical way were completed when al-Qushāshī appointed him as a *khalīfa* of the Shattāriyya and Qādiriyya *ṭarīqas*. After the death of al-Qushāshī, al-Sinkilī completed his further education with al-Kūrānī, who was al-Qushāshī's *khalīfa*. Al-Sinkilī's personal relationship with al-Kūrānī appears to have been very close. It has been suggested that it was al-Sinkilī who requested al-Kūrānī to write the *Ithāf al-dhakī*. After his return to Aceh, al-Sinkilī maintained his close relationship with al-Kūrānī. This is apparent from his request to al-Kūrānī for his opinion regarding al-Rānīrī's case. This is not the only question sent by al-Sinkilī across the Indian Ocean to al-Kūrānī. In the concluding notes to his work, *Lubb al-kashf wa'l-bayān li-mā yarāhu al-muhtaḍar bi'l-'iyān*, which deals with the best type of *dhikr* for the dying, he writes:

'Let it be known, my disciples, that after I wrote this treatise, I sent a letter to the city of the Prophet, to our enlightened Shaykh in the science of Realities (*'ilm al-ḥaqā'iq*) and in the

44 Voorhoeve, 'Van en over Nuruddin al-Raniri' 365-8; Azra, 'The Transmission' 371-3.

science of secret details of things (*‘ilm al-daqa’iq*), i.e. Shaykh Mawlā Ibrāhīm (al-Kūrānī), asking his opinion about all matters described at the beginning of this treatise...; whether it is correct in the opinion of the (leading) Sufis, and whether this issue concerning the best *dhikr* is discussed in *ḥadīth* books or in many other books... After some time, the treatise entitled *Kashf al-muntaẓar* was sent by our Shaykh, in which he answered all these questions’.⁴⁵

Thus, al-Sinkilī was one of the prominent scholars who acted as a bridge between Islam in the Malay-Indonesian world and Islam in the Middle East. It is during the time of al-Sinkilī that an intense relationship developed between these two worlds of Islam. This development is reflected in the number of works devoted by Ḥaramayn scholars to answering questions of a religious nature which arose among Malay-Indonesian Muslims. Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī, as we have seen, formulated three such answers: the *Ithāf al-dhakī*, the response dealing with al-Rānīrī’s case, and the answer to al-Sinkilī’s question concerning the best *dhikr*. He also wrote another work on the ‘*masā’il al-Jāwiyya*’ (matters concerning the Jāwī people) entitled *al-Jawābat al-gharāwiyya ‘an al-masā’il al-jāwiyya al-jahriyya*. In this work he apparently attempts once more to clarify the proper relationship between the sharia and *taṣawwuf*.

Concern for the religious problems of the Jāwī people evidently persisted for some time in al-Kūrānī’s circle. ‘Abd al-Shukūr al-Shāmī, very probably one of al-Kūrānī’s students, wrote a work called *Ziyāda min ‘ibārat al-mutaqaddim min al-jāwī*. This work, like the *Ithāf al-dhakī* deals with the question of being and the Unity of God. Another work written in order to clarify the matter was *al-Jāda al-qawīma ilā ṭahqīq mas’alat al-wujūd wa-ta‘alluq al-qudra al-qadīma fī jawāb ‘an al-as’ila al-wārida min [Bilād] Jāwa* by Tāj al-Dīn b. Aḥmad, better known as Ibn Ya‘qūb, a prominent Meccan scholar.⁴⁶

The effort of Ḥaramayn scholars to disseminate a more sharia-oriented or orthodox Islam in the Archipelago in the seventeenth century reached its peak when the chief *muftī* of Mecca sent a fatwa to Aceh stating that rule over an Islamic Kingdom by a woman ran contrary to the sharia. As a result, Kamālat al-Dīn (r. 1098-1109/1688-99), the last of a series of queens who ruled the Acehnese Sultanate, was deposed from the throne. Although it is clear that al-Sinkilī was also a sharia-oriented Sufi, the deposition of the sultana, who had been his patron indicates that Islamic orthodoxy was gain-

⁴⁵ Cited in Azra, op. cit. 393.

⁴⁶ Azra, op.cit. 261-2.

ing momentum in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago. Al-Sinkilī himself was in fact the first scholar in this region to write a work on *fiqh mu'āmalā* in Malay called *Mir'āt al-ṭullāb fī tashīl ma'rifat aḥkām al-sharī'a li'l-malik al-wahhāb*. Unlike *al-Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* of al-Rānīrī, which deals solely with *'ibādāt*, the *Mir'āt al-ṭullāb* sets out the *mu'āmalā* aspect of *fiqh*, affecting the political, social, economic and religious life of Muslims. In this work he shows his fellow Muslims that Islamic legal doctrines are not purely confined to matters of *'ibāda* but include all aspects of their daily life. Al-Sinkilī furthered this Islamic scripturalist trend by writing a complete commentary on the Koran in Malay entitled *Tarjumān al-mustafīd*. This was also the first complete *tafsīr* of the Koran produced locally in the Archipelago.

As far as his Sufism is concerned, al-Sinkilī insists on the transcendence of God over His creation, and refuses to accept the ideas of the Wujūdiyya. He maintains that before God had created the universe (*al-ʿālam*), he continually thought of Himself, which resulted in the creation of the *nūr Muḥammad* (the light that is Muḥammad). It is from the *nūr Muḥammad* that God created permanent archetypes (*al-a'yān al-thābitha*), namely, the potential universe, which became the source of external archetypes (*al-a'yān al-khārijīyya*), creation in its concrete form. Al-Sinkilī reminds one that although the *a'yān al-khārijīyya* are 'emanations' of Absolute Being, they are distinct from God Himself: as a hand is distinct from its shadow. Although the hand can hardly be separated from its shadow, the latter is not identical with the former.

The core of al-Sinkilī's teachings is the harmony between the legal and mystical aspects of Islam. In the twenty-two works he is known to have written, his position that *taṣawwuf* must go hand in hand with the sharia is clearly expressed. He believes that only by total obedience to the Law can aspirants on the mystic path attain genuine experience of *ḥaqīqa* (higher reality).

It is important to bear in mind that al-Sinkilī's approach to establishing harmony was different from that of al-Rānīrī's. Al-Sinkilī was a peaceful, not a radical, scholar. He preferred to reconcile opposing views rather than to side with either one of them. Even though he was against the doctrines of Wujūdiyya, he only states his view implicitly. Similarly, he expresses his dislike for al-Rānīrī's radical approach in a subdued manner. Without mentioning al-Rānīrī by name, he wisely reminds Muslims in his *Daqā'iq al-ḥurūf* of the danger of accusing others of unbelief by citing a *ḥadīth* from the Prophet: 'Let no man accuse another of leading a sinful life or infi-

delity, for the accusation will turn against him if it is false'.⁴⁷

Again, essentially the same brand of Sufism was preached by the third leading Malay-Indonesian *‘ālim* of the seventeenth century, Muḥammad Yūsuf b. ʿAbd Allāh Abū al-Maḥāsin al-Tāj al-Khalwatī al-Maqassārī, better known as Shaykh Yūsuf (1037-1111/1627-99). Born in Gowa in South Sulawesi, al-Maqassārī, like al-Sinkilī spent almost two decades in Arabia in pursuit of Islamic learning. The most important among his teachers in Arabia were Muḥammad b. al-Bāqī al-Mizjājī al-Naqshbandī, a leading scholar in the Yemen, Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī, and Ayyūb b. Aḥmad b. Ayyūb al-Dimashqī al-Khalwatī (994-1071/1568-1661). After his return, al-Maqassārī attained the peak of his career in the Bantenese Sultanate of West Java, becoming one of its highest officials.⁴⁸

Like al-Sinkilī, al-Maqassārī emphasizes the transcendence of God over His creation; in his opinion, nothing can be compared with Him. Despite his insistence on the transcendence of God, al-Maqassārī believes that He is also all-encompassing (*al-iḥāṭa*) and omnipresent (*al-maʿiyya*) in His creation. But he takes great care not to associate himself with the doctrine of pantheistic Sufism by maintaining that although God is present or expresses Himself in His creation, this does not therefore mean that the creation is God Himself; all creation simply has the status of allegorical being (*al-mawjūd al-majāzī*), not that of real being (*al-mawjūd al-ḥaqīqī*). Thus, not unlike al-Sinkilī, he believes that creation is only a shadow of God, not God Himself.

Al-Maqassārī reserves *taṣawwuf* for the select of the elite (*khāṣṣ al-khawwāṣ*) only. He calls his *taṣawwuf* the *‘ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya’* or *‘ṭarīqa aḥmadiyya’* which constitutes the right path (*al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*). Throughout his twenty-nine known works, he makes clear that the mystic path can only be trodden in total commitment, both outward and inward, to the legal doctrines of Islam. He maintains that committing oneself solely to the sharia is better than practicing *taṣawwuf* while ignoring Islamic legal precepts. He even classifies as *zindīq* (freethinkers) and *mulḥid* (heretics) those who believe that they can draw close to God without practicing such rituals as prayer and fasting.

The above discussion illustrates that opposition to Sufism in the East Indies in the seventeenth century was not directed at Sufism as

⁴⁷ Cited in Johns, 'Aspects' 153-4.

⁴⁸ Azra, op. cit. 416-38.

such. Opposition in its most radical form, represented by al-Rānīrī, was directed against what was considered to be false Sufism, i.e. Sufism which either violated the sharia, or put too much emphasis on the immanence of God at the expense of His transcendence. All the leading Malay-Indonesian ulama mentioned were in fact Sufis themselves as well as being *fuqahā*⁴⁹. Therefore, it is not surprising that they sought to reconcile or to harmonize *taṣawwuf* with the sharia. As al-Maqassārī put it: 'Let it be known, my fellows, that exoteric devotion without esoteric devotion is like a body without a spirit (*rūh*), whereas esoteric occupation without exoteric devotion is like a spirit without a body'.⁴⁹

These religious tendencies continued to gain momentum from the eighteenth century onwards. As a result, by the end of the eighteenth century local religious literature in the Palembang region (South Sumatra), to give just one example, did not include the works of Ḥamza al-Fansūrī or Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī, nor any writings which were considered 'unorthodox' or even contained some 'heterodox' teachings. The works of al-Rānīrī and al-Sinkilī, however, had a wide circulation.⁵⁰

Prominent Palembang scholars such as Shihāb al-Dīn b. °Abd Allāh Muḥammad preached the more sharia-oriented Sufism of al-Junayd, al-Qushayrī and al-Ghazālī. Shihāb al-Dīn even went as far as to condemn the reading of works on the *martabat tujuh* (seven grades of being). It appears that he opposed this doctrine simply because he feared that it would lead his fellow Muslims astray. He assumed they would misunderstand such works because of their lack of solid grounding in Islamic knowledge, particularly of the sharia.⁵¹ The same viewpoint was held by another Palembang scholar, Kemas Fakhr al-Dīn (1113-57/1719-63) whose works mainly deal with Ghazalian Sufism.

The most prominent 'translator' of Ghazalian Sufism, however, was another Palembang scholar of Arab origin, Sayyid °Abd al-Ṣamad b. °Abd Allāh [or °Abd al-Raḥmān] al-Jāwī al-Palimbānī (d. ca. 1203/1789). Born in Palembang, al-Palimbānī acquired his advanced education in the Ḥaramayn, where he apparently finally settled. Despite the fact that he never returned to the Archipelago, he

⁴⁹ Ibid. 455.

⁵⁰ G.W.J. Drewes, *Directions for Travellers on the Mystic Path* (The Hague 1977) 217; T. Iskandar, 'Palembang Kraton Manuscripts', in C.M.S. Helwing & S.O. Robson (eds.), *A Man of Indonesian Letters: Essays in Honour of Professor A. Teeuw* (Dordrecht 1986) 68-9.

⁵¹ Drewes, *Directions* 212-9.

maintained a deep concern for Islam and Muslims in this region. His writings, mostly in Malay, were widely circulated in the Archipelago. He was an expert on Ghazalian Sufism in particular, and he was renowned in the Ḥaramayn for his outstanding expertise on al-Ghazālī's *Ihyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*.⁵²

Two of the most important works of al-Palimbānī, *Hidāyat al-sālikīn* and *Sayr al-sālikīn*, are in fact adaptations of al-Ghazālī's writings. Both works elucidate the principles of Islamic faith and religious duties, to which every aspirant of the mystic path should commit himself. Al-Palimbānī believes that the grace of God can be attained only through correct faith in the Absolute Unity of God and total obedience to the precepts of the sharia. In his *taṣawwuf* he emphasizes purifying the mind and moral conduct more than the exploration of speculative and philosophical mysticism.⁵³

It is important to note, however, that like most other Sufis, al-Palimbānī accepts certain notions of philosophical Sufism as developed by Ibn 'Arabi, al-Jīlī or even al-Sumatrānī whose works he recommended for reading by advanced (*muntahī*) adherents of Sufism. To him the works of these scholars are important for those who have gained a fuller understanding of Islam. He does not recommend them for those who are at the intermediate (*mutawassīṭ*) level, let alone at the beginner (*al-mubtadi'*) level. For these two levels, he advised the reading of *fiqh* or sharia-oriented mystical works.

Yet, al-Palimbānī was opposed to the speculative notions of mysticism. In a work attributed to him, he denounced the doctrines of the *wujūdiyya mulḥid* as well as the practice of giving offerings to the spirit ancestors,⁵⁴ suggesting that to him both were equally reprehensible. Like al-Rānīrī, al-Palimbānī divides the doctrines of Wujūdiyya into *wujūdiyya mulḥid* and *wujūdiyya muwaḥḥid*. Al-Palimbānī points out that according to the followers of the *wujūdiyya mulḥid*, the first article of belief, i.e. *lā ilāha illā 'llāh*, means that we are God's beings.⁵⁵ Furthermore, al-Palimbānī explains:

'They also say *inna'l-ḥaqq subḥānahū wa-ta'ālā laysa bi-mawjūd illā fī ḍimn wujūd al-kā'ināt* (sic), that is, the Reality of God does not exist except in the beings of all created things.

⁵² 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Bayṭār, *Ḥilyat al-bashar fī tārikh al-qarn al-thālith 'ashar*, iii vols. (Damascus 1383/1963) ii, 851.

⁵³ Azra, 'The Transmission' 535.

⁵⁴ 'Abd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī, *Tuḥfat al-rāghibīn fī bayān ḥaqīqat imān al-mu'minīn*, MS Jakarta National Library ML. 719, 2, 25-6.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 26.

Thus, they insist that the Unity of God exists only in the beings of creation... Moreover, they say that we have a nature (*sebangsa*) and a being (*sewujud*) which are similar to God... and that the Essence of God is knowable, for He exists in the external world (*khārij*) in time and place. Such a belief is infidelity (*kufur*).⁵⁶

Again, recalling al-Rānī's viewpoint, al-Palimbānī includes the followers of *wujūdiyya mulhid* among the group of people whom he calls pseudo-Sufis (*kaum yang bersufi-Sufian dirinya*). Another group of pseudo-Sufis, according to al-Palimbānī, were the adherents of *hulūliyya* (the doctrine of God's incarnation). He maintains that their error is their belief that God becomes incarnate in the being of man and other creatures.⁵⁷

In al-Palimbānī's view, true Sufis were the followers of the doctrines of *wujūdiyya muwahhid*, for these Sufis affirmed the Absolute Unity of God in Himself. They were called the Wujūdiyya because 'their belief and intellectual disposition centered on the Absolute Unity of God'. Thus, it is clear that for al-Palimbānī the true Sufis put greater stress on the transcendence of God than on His immanence. Although they accept the notion that God is to a certain extent immanent in creation, it is anathema to them for anyone to say that God is identical with creation.

Another leading Malay scholar, Dāwūd b. °Abd Allāh al-Fatānī (d. 1259/1843) who lived in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, essentially held the same opinion. Being the most prolific writer of the period, al-Fatānī acquired his advanced knowledge in Mecca, where he finally settled.⁵⁸

Al-Fatānī, from Patani in South Thailand, was very critical of people who styled themselves as Sufis, while they were in fact simply pseudo-Sufis (*berlagak seperti sufi*) who were ignorant of the true teachings of Sufism. According to al-Fatānī, people who claim to have achieved complete union (*ittiḥād*) with God are among the groups of pseudo-Sufis. He bitterly denounces them:

'The people of *ittiḥād* believe that their essence (*dhāt*) becomes the essence of God. This is their gross infidelity (*kufur*). Those who worship idols are much better than they are... they think that they achieve the true vision. [On the contrary] they have arrived in the presence of Iblis (Satan)'.⁵⁹

In connection with this view, al-Fatānī composed a special work,

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Azra, 'The Transmission' 515-22; H.W.M. Abdulla, *Syekh Daud Bin Abdulla al-Fatani: °Ulama dan Pengarang Terulung Asia Tenggara* (Kuala Lumpur 1990).

⁵⁹ Cited in Abdulla, op. cit. 107.

entitled *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*, as an answer to, and explanation of, various concepts and terms in *taṣawwuf*. Thus, in addition to discussing such concepts as *wahdat al-wujūd*, *martabat tujuh* and other mystico-theological matters, al-Fatanī supplemented the work with a list of some key terms in Sufi vocabularies and their meanings. In his introductory remarks the author again criticizes pseudo-Sufis who misunderstand such concepts as *wahdat al-wujūd*, because they simply take it in a literal sense. For that reason, he reminds Muslims that books dealing with these topics should be read only by experts or by those who have a solid grounding in the *ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya*.⁶⁰

Eighteenth-century opposition to the doctrine of *wujūdiyya mulḥid*, as in the case of al-Rānīrī, also took its toll. There is the example of Muḥammad Arshad al-Banjārī, a fellow student of al-Palimbānī in the Ḥaramayn, who devoted his life to propagating Islam in South Kalimantan. Al-Banjārī (1122-1227/1710-1812), known mostly for his magnum opus, the *Sabīl al-muhtadīn*, a *fiqh* book in Malay, was opposed to the doctrine of *wujūdiyya mulḥid*.

According to local tradition, a scholar named Haji °Abd al-Hamid Abulung came to South Kalimantan, several years after al-Banjārī's return to his homeland. It is said that Abulung introduced to the local Muslims the kind of teachings which had been categorized by both al-Rānīrī and al-Palimbānī as *wujūdiyya mulḥid*. Abulung reportedly taught people that 'There is no being but God'. 'There is no °Abd al-Hamid but God; He is I and I am He'.⁶¹ As a result, religious confusion spread among the population and Abulung was summoned to the royal court. Al-Banjārī, asked to give his opinion on Abulung's beliefs, issued a fatwa declaring Abulung's teachings heretical. Since Abulung fiercely held to his belief, the sultan Taḥmīd Allāh ordered his execution.⁶² This is clearly reminiscent of the heresy-hunting and execution of the Wujūdiyya followers in Aceh during the time of al-Rānīrī.

This paper has attempted to show that opposition to Sufism in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago up to the eighteenth century was directed by and large against a philosophical brand of Sufism. Conversely, there was no opposition to Sufism which was practiced in

⁶⁰ Azra, op. cit. 547.

⁶¹ Jusuf Halidi, *Ulama Besar Kalimantan: Sjech Muḥammad Arsjad al-Bandjari* (Martapura 1968) 11-2.

⁶² Ibid. 12.

accordance with the sharia. From the second half of the seventeenth century onwards, leading ulama in the East-Indies tended to propound an orthodox scripturalist form of Sufism. Growing religio-intellectual contacts with the Middle East throughout the ensuing period contributed significantly to the spread of this form of Sufism in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago.

OPPOSITION TO ISLAMIC MYSTICISM IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY INDONESIA

KAREL STEENBRINK

Indonesian society is heir to a long and rich tradition in the arts, literature, and folklore. The best-known and most developed exemplar of this tradition is the shadow play, *wayang*. The presentation of the protagonists at the beginning of the play indicates a clear division between good and evil through the separation of the two families, the Pandawa on the left side and the Korawa on the right. The rigidity of this division does not reflect the permanent nature of the characters. Good and evil, male and female, beauty and ugliness are not permanent attributes; they may easily turn into their opposites. The monstrous Kumbakarna, certainly a bad character, perishes in the battle of Sri Lanka, an episode of the Ramayana stories, but then his soul, or even his whole personality, is redeemed and flies away. In his redeemed state the good elements, hidden but not entirely absent from his former state of being, become dominant.

Comparable transfigurations are encountered in *Syair Sultan Abdul Muluk*, a long epic in verse written around 1840 by Raja Ali Haji of Riau, a great promoter of the Naqshbandiyya brotherhood. This epic, however, has a distinctly 'Islamic' atmosphere. It relates how a certain Sultan Abdul Muluk is taken prisoner, whereupon his consort flees to the forest and looks for ways to liberate her husband and to destroy the enemy. To achieve her ends, she disguises herself as a man, becomes head of an army, and even 'marries' another woman. The plot offers many amusing descriptions of situations in which the disguised heroine has to evade her/his new consort at night. The text also contains more edifying passages and presents a quite harmonious mixture of divergent types of society and religion. Moreover, it portrays an ideal harmony between the ruling class of state officials and religious bureaucracy in the cities, and the peasants and pious hermits in the countryside.¹

¹ Karel Steenbrink, 'Syair Abdul Muluk: Raja Ali Haji dari Penyengat', *Jurnal Ulumul Qur'an*, iv/1 (1993) 99-111.

Reminiscent of the protagonists in the *wayang* plays and in Raja Ali Haji's epic are the principal characters in some of the key-works in Javanese literature. During the nineteenth century more works of a distinctly Islamic character were produced in Javanese than in any other major language in the Archipelago, including Malay, Sundanese, Buginese or Macassarese.

By far the most impressive work in nineteenth-century Javanese literature is the *Serat Centhini*, a poem of more than 10,000 lines, composed by court poets of the Kingdom of Surakarta. These poets worked under the supervision of the later Sunan Pakubuwana V (r. 1820-1823) who had to prove to his father that he was no longer as frivolous as he had been for a long period, but was a serious man of letters who valued education. The authors employ the structure, along with much of the subject matter, of traditional Javanese poetry which is crafted around the theme of a wandering religious man who travels from place to place in his quest for a younger brother. In such traditional works the main character sometimes bears the name *Sajati*, 'the essential', as for instance in the *Serat Jatiswara*.² In the *Serat Centhini* the older brother is called Jayengresmi, 'the man of desire', and is searching for his brother Jayengsari or 'the perfect man'.

In the *Serat Centhini* many subjects are discussed, and its contents are truly encyclopaedic. The various episodes normally begin with a description of the landscape. Its beauty and its hardships for the wandering protagonist are noted. Then, from a distance, he sees a small village, or the dwelling place of a *santri*, a religious teacher of the countryside living in a manner more or less similar to the hermits of pre-Islamic times.³ Coming closer, the wandering hero sees a woman taking her afternoon bath in a pond which is part of the *santri*'s compound. The hero waits politely until he may enter without causing embarrassment, and is subsequently received by the master of the hermitage who offers him food and drink. After the evening prayers, the host starts a discussion, mostly on mystical themes, such as the attributes of God, His names, and His emanations. Magic, divination, cooking, the pleasures of sexual inter-

² T.E. Behrendt, *Serat Jatiswara. Struktur dan Perubahan di dalam Puisi Jawa 1600-1930* (Jakarta 1995), which is the Indonesian translation of *The Serat Jatiswara. Structure and Change in a Javanese Poem, 1600-1930* (Ph.D. Diss., Canberra 1987).

³ See I. Kuntoro Wiryamartana, 'The Scriptoria in the Merbabu-Merapi Area', *BKI* cxlix (1993) 503-509, not only for 'scriptoria', but also for places of teaching, science and production of manuscripts in the mountainous areas of Central Java around 1800.

course, and even riddles, may become the subject of discussion during these nightly sessions. The short remaining moments of the night are spent in sleep before the main character departs and travels to the next stop on his quest. The *Serat Centhini*, which is written in a very polished but also very complicated Javanese, presents a comprehensive image of an idealised Javanese society. It does not mention the Europeans, although by the time of its composition Dutch colonialism already dominated the economic and political life of the area.

Concerning mystical teachings in the *Serat Centhini*,⁴ much work still remains to be done: the complete text was not available in print until recently, and only a few studies have been undertaken about this poem.⁵ The representatives of official Islam play an important role in some episodes. As a group these representatives are called *kaum*; their main spokesman is the *penghulu* (i.e. the judge: *qāḍī*). Invariably the *kaum* are depicted as rude, impolite, greedy and even incapable of having normal satisfying sexual relations. At the end of the long story, however, the protagonist of the poem is condemned to death for teaching the unity of God and man. A *penghulu* is the main opponent during the trial and the sentence is carried out by throwing Jayengresmi, i.e. 'the man of desire', from a high cliff into the Ocean in the name of the ruler of Central Java, Sultan Agung.

After hearing about the trial and the sentence, Sultan Agung appeases the conflict by declaring that Jayengresmi was a pious man who wanted to attain perfection in this life. But only the king is entitled to pursue such an ideal in this world.⁶ The unhappy outcome for the mystic, who is in fact the hero of the epic poem, should also be understood in conjunction with past and present political realities. Jayengresmi is a descendant of the first saint-king of Surabaya, a town which Sultan Agung incorporated into the Kingdom of Mataram in 1625. Therefore, Jayengresmi's condemnation may be explained, at least in part, as the consequence of his being the embodiment of opposition to Sultan Agung's rule. Officially, however, the

⁴ S. Soebardi, 'Santri-religious elements as reflected in the Book of Tjentini', *BKI* cxxvii (1971) 331-349; and Haji Muhammad Rasjidi, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire de l'Islam à Java* (Paris 1977).

⁵ For a Dutch summary of the *Centhini*, see Th. Pigeaud, *De serat Tjabolang en de serat Tjentini* (Bandung 1933). Two very different versions of the Javanese text are R.Ng. Soeradiopoera (ed.), *Serat Tjentini*, iv vols. (Batavia 1912-1915); and Kamajaya (ed.), *Serat Centhini Latin*, xii vols. (Yogyakarta 1985).

⁶ Th. Pigeaud, *De serat Tjabolang en de Serat Tjentini: inhoudsopgaven* (Bandung 1933) 56.

death sentence is based on the fact that he despised the conscientious application of the Muslim Law, the sharia, and stressed the mystical aspects of Islam.

The long epic poem of *Serat Centhini* contains within it many shorter poems, known as *suluk*. These are often in the form of a discussion between a (mystic) teacher and his pupil, male or female. When the pupil is a female, she is usually the wife of the teacher. One of the *suluk* which reflects opposition between official Islam and mysticism is the *Suluk Abesi*. Many versions of this poem exist, both in the various texts of the *Serat Centhini* and in collections of *suluk*-poetry. The core of the poem of about two hundred lines is the debate between a *penghulu* and an 'Abesi' (nickname for a black slave: Abyssinian?) who belittles the latter. The most relevant section of the poem in English translation is as follows:⁷

1.

We will speak about a wandering Abyssinian
soliciting to become pupil of the High Penghulu,
asking introduction to his science.
'Venerable Lord — he said — grant me the boon
of learning the perfection of life
although I am an ignorant being.
Bestow on me a particle of the real knowledge
that leads to *gnosis* (*ma'rifat*).
I want to be your humble servant,
faithful to my lord.'

2.

The Penghulu became angry and shouted:
'I will not impart to you one small word
because you are sitting here;
your knowledge already befits your condition.
The town-dwellers are lofty people.
It would not be proper
for me to confer my knowledge
on an Abyssinian

⁷ The original Javanese text of the *Suluk Abesi* has never been edited. We follow the text which is found in MS Leiden Or 7375. The *suluk* research group at the Islamic Academy IAIN Sunan Kalijaga of Yogyakarta analyzed this text during the years 1987-1991 but did not publish its findings. The famous poet Emha Ainun Nadjib used the results of the project for his free translation into Indonesian [cf. *Suluk Pesisiran* (Bandung 1989) 32-39].

whose body is black as a nigger.'

3.

The vagabond replied:
 'My Lord, you should not behave like this
 and humiliate me.'
 The Lord Penghulu repeated
 his words full of anger:
 'Hey, nigger, be gone
 from this mosque,
 leave my presence.
 I have no intention of giving my knowledge
 to someone like you!'

4.

The Abyssinian was lost for words and asked forgiveness:
 'Oh Lord Penghulu, I ask your advise
 about the vast ocean.
 Where do we find its border?
 What is the tablet without writing?
 The lotus without a pond?
 What is the meaning of all this?
 Please, give me your explanation!' [...]

7.

The honorable Penghulu replied in his cultivated manner:
 'I beg your pardon, Abyssinian.
 I really want to apologize
 for having offended you.
 Please, forgive me.
 What you have asked about
 with your words,
 you must explain by yourself.
 For my part I do not yet know
 the meaning of these words.

8.

I beseech your help in elucidation,
 and hope you will not object
 to explaining what is hidden.'
 The Abyssinian said:
 'An ocean without border,

can it be anything but Allah?
 All being (*mawjūd*)
 will vanish,
 disappear into God's encompassing Essence (*dhāt Allāh*).
 This is the breadth of the ocean.

9.

A tablet without writing,
 that is God alone.
 There is no servant.
 No writing can be seen.
 Only the tablet can be seen,
 a sign of the unique being
 the Essence (*wujūd*) of the High Lord (*Hyang Agung*),
 one essence, one sensation,
 one life, eternal without wavering.
 That is the infinite tablet.' [...]

10.

The lotus which blossoms perennially
 without standing in a pond.
 That is the Ruf Idafi.
 The Most High
 exists without a place.
 That is what I know:
 the Absolute Essence generates
 the existence of the world,
 exhibits its existence.

This poem clearly displays sympathy for the mystical viewpoint: the representative of official legalistic Islam quickly acknowledges the superiority of the mystic. At the same time, the poem reflects a perhaps somewhat paradigmatic conceptualisation of the religious landscape: official Islam is found in the city, the centre of power, where high-ranking people reside; mystical Islam is found in the countryside, which is the abode of the dark-skinned people of the farmland and the hermits of the forest.

The hostility of *santri* Islam towards legalistic Islam is sometimes manifested in criticism of Arab-style Islam and a corresponding esteem for the Javanese Islamic style. This hostility is a major topic in a highly revered poem, the *Wedhatama* (i.e. the ultimate Veda or Science), attributed to the minor ruler of Surakarta, Prince Mang-

kunagara IV (1811-1881).⁸ Unlike the *Serat Centhini* and the *Suluk Abesi*, the *Wedhatama* is still a very popular text in Javanese circles. It has often been published, with commentaries and a translation into modern Indonesian as well. The text originates in the centre of power and the abode of the official custodians of Islam, and it criticises the legalistic form of Islam as foreign:

III, 5

Many are the young people who boast of their theological knowledge.

6.

Though not yet qualified
they are in a hurry to show off;
the way they interpret the Arabic texts
is like a Sayid from Egypt:
every time they belittle the abilities of others.

7.

Such persons
can be reckoned as frauds:
where is their common sense?
Oddly enough they deny their Javanese soul,
and at all costs bend their steps to Mecca in search of knowledge.

8.

They do not comprehend
that the core of the essence which they seek
is closely tied to their own self;
providing you practise hard,
if you are here or there.⁹

In some texts of Javanese literature this anti-Arab and nationalist feeling may be expressed so strongly that one has the impression of reading a non-Islamic or even an anti-Islamic polemic. This is especially the case with the famous *Suluk Gatoloco*, which was written around 1860 and was the subject of vehement discussion into the twentieth century.¹⁰ The most recent analysis of this remarkable

⁸ Stuart Robson, *The Wedhatama. An English Translation* (Leiden 1990).

⁹ Robson, op. cit. 37

¹⁰ G.W.J. Drewes, 'The struggle between Javanism and Islam as illustrated by the *Serat*

expression of protest against official Islam mentions among its major themes the tradition of Sufism, with its emphasis on the esoteric interpretation of the terminology and practice of Islam, as well as Javanese nationalism, i.e. glorification of the heroes, culture, and even the landscape of Java.¹¹

The main character in the poem, Gatoloco, enters into a debate with three representatives of Islamic orthodoxy. In the lively discussion, the language used is not always polite and decent. The name Gatoloco is derived from two words meaning 'penis' and 'masturbate'. Therefore, the proponent of orthodoxy, Ki Ngamat Ngaris states:

IV/18

The name you bear is *ḥarām*.
It is laid down
In all the *kitābs* that I possess
That those who die *ḥarām* must go to Hell,
Whereas those who are *ḥalāl* will soar to heaven.

19

The one fatal consequence of your name is that
You're what the *kitābs* call *makrūh*, *najis*!...

The orthodox opponents focus on Gatoloco's denial of the universal value of the sharia. His reply often refers to general mystical themes pertaining to the ultimate value of the interior life of the individual:

IV/36

Angrily Gatoloco answered them:
'The Meccan Messenger you glorify
Has no existence, for he died
A thousand years ago.
His home was in the land of Araby,
Full seven months away

Darmogandul', *BKI* cxxii (1966) 309-365; and Haji Muhammad Rasjidi, *Islam dan Kebatinan* (Jakarta 1967).

¹¹ Benedict Anderson, 'The *Suluk Gatoloco*', *Indonesia* xxxii (1981) 109-150 and xxxiii (1982) 31-88. Other major themes identified by this author are an age-old autochthonous fertility cult connected with forms of ancestor-worship; and a heterodox conception of the way to impose one's power by means of magic; cf. Anderson, op. cit. 112-113.

And sea-concealed.
 All that remains of him is a grave.
 Each day, you make your upside-down prostration.
 Do you really hope to reach him thus?

37

That's why your prostrations bring no benefit.
 To know your own true self, you must prostrate
 To your own Messenger — I mean
 Your inward life. Prostration
 To messengers outside your Self,
 With all the ritual words,
 Are a waste of breath.
 You call on Allah in vain,
 Shouting against each other so contentiously
 That Allah gets no sleep!...

Also the nationalist and anti-Arab themes are orchestrated in this debate:

V/37

Know the religion of Muḥammad
 Is the religion of the Arabs.
 Since you invoke a foreign people,
 Again you're simply proven to be thieves.
 Upon a foreigner
 You call because you live in sin,
 Your knowledge immature,
 Faithless in everything you do;
 Therefore your faith is hopelessly degenerate.

38

Beginning from the ancient times
 Up to the Age of Majapahit
 The Javanese invoked the gods.
 But with Demak this changed; they called
 Upon the Messenger
 Of God. This Arabic name
 You have adopted now,
 Abandoning the old religion
 Which means you're jiveass Javanese and infidels...

The kingdom of Majapahit (1293- ca. 1520) was the last Hindu-kingdom of Java. The ruler of the harbour-state of Demak, one of the first Muslim rulers, gave the command to launch the final attack on the glorious Majapahit. In the verses quoted above, nationalist feelings clearly take precedence over attachment to Islam

The four sample texts from nineteenth-century Javanese literary tradition quoted above have their geographical limitations, and are not representative of the nature of the hostility between *santri* Islam and legalistic Islam in other parts of Indonesia. Yet, Islam in Java constitutes the most characteristic section of Indonesian Islam in this century. In Malay, Sundanese, Macassarese and Buginese literary output, Islamic scholars, almost without exception, restricted themselves to the well-known warnings against an overheated mysticism practised by insufficiently trained and inexperienced young people. They disavowed any claims to the mystic path's superiority over the basic legal requirements. Contrary to the Javanese examples given above, the texts produced by these scholars do not contain distinctive materials indicating a particular local form of mystical tradition. In the case of the Javanese text materials, however, the existence of nationalism, mystical tendencies, magic and popular religion, sometimes even glorification of pre-Islamic tradition, is confirmed, along with opposition between this distinctive form of Islamic culture and a legalistic one which stresses the universal supremacy of the Law, of rules for rituals, and of the authority of the official custodians of the legalistic heritage. In the Javanese literary tradition, mystical leaders often enjoy greater sympathy than their legalist opponents. In real life, however, the situation was quite different for a number of mystic leaders in nineteenth-century Indonesia.

Islamic leadership in nineteenth-century Indonesia, and notably on the islands of Java and Madura, consisted of two distinct categories: the *penghulu*, i.e. religious officials who administered the mosques in the major cities and their dependencies, and religious teachers. The *penghulu* also presided over the religious courts where all cases of family law, marriage, and inheritance were decided. The key persons among the *penghulu* were directly or indirectly appointed by the Dutch colonial rulers and received a salary through the colonial administration. Religious teachers, on the other hand, often settled in areas outside the major towns and served their *pesantren*, i.e. independent learning communities. Only a minority among these teachers were connected with the political system. Many of them had the authority to initiate novices into one or more Sufi orders which have

a following in other parts of the Islamic world. In the first half of the nineteenth century the Shattāriyya and Sammāniyya were the most popular, whereas the Rifā'iyya, Qādiriyya and Naqshbandiyya gained influence in the second half.¹² A number of mystic teachers had no affiliations with a particular brotherhood; they were independent and initiated their novices into their own version of Islamic mysticism. Occasionally if these teachers became famous and attracted a large following, the indigenous and colonial rulers would arrange for their deportation.¹³

One of the most famous cases in this category is that of Kiyahi Hasan Maulani of Lengkong, a small village not far from the northern coast of West-Java. Hasan Maulani was born around 1780, and had become famous as a religious teacher in the early eighteen-forties. Essentially his teaching consisted of a personal mixture of mystic and magic practices, and included a number of special prayers, some related to the Rifā'iyya, some to the Sammāniyya brotherhood. His popularity, and his authority over large segments of the population, caused envy among the religious officials. When Hasan Maulani proclaimed that imminent rule of the devil, as predicted by several special omens in the area, could be avoided by holding religious meals (*slametan*), some Muslim officials questioned his religious orthodoxy. *Slametans*, they argued, are not required by sharia, Koran or the *ḥadīth*, or on the basis of other religious authority. Eventually, complaints about Hasan from a number of religious and secular indigenous officials reached the Dutch colonial authorities. Their assessment of the case is spelled out by the Resident of the Preanger, the Dutch colonial official in the area, in the following text:

'... [A number of the native officials do not hesitate to ask for advice about Hasan Maulani.] ... This suggests that they honour him to a higher degree than is suitable for officials. It may hamper the regent [native rulers under colonial authority] in the performance of his duties. If this is the case, the influence of Moelanie [i.e. Kiai Hasan] might conflict with the authority of the [colonial] Government, since all orders by native rulers are based on orders received from the Government. He [Kiai Hasan] is acting entirely in opposition to the authority of religious officials, since he promulgates regulations on his own authority which are not at all in ac-

¹² Werner Kraus, 'Some notes on the Introduction of the Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya into Indonesia', in Marc Gaborieau, Alexandre Popovic et Thierry Zarcone (eds.), *Naqshbandis: Cheminements et situation actuelle d'un ordre mystique musulman* (Istanbul/Paris 1990) 691-706.

¹³ The following accounts are based on G.W.J. Drewes, *Drie Javaansche Goeroe's: hun leven, onderricht en messiasprediking* (Ph.D. Diss., Leiden 1925).

cordance with Islamic doctrine. This has been heavily criticised by the *penghulu* and especially by the Head-*penghulu*. It undermines their authority as government officials. The common Javanese, being rather credulous, have been influenced by his words and by certain circumstances so as to see him as a person with supernatural powers. Thus, this religious leader's prestige far exceeds what befits a religious leader, or, what can be tolerated in view of the need for social peace... He is a danger to society. I cannot believe that the more than normal influence exercised by such a religious leader, whose behaviour has been monitored by the police for a number of years, is in accordance with the interests of the government'.¹⁴

The mixture of religious and political arguments in this text, which is a fragment of a formal communication to the Governor General of the colony, makes the follow-up predictable. Hasan Maulani was expelled to Menado, in the northern (Christian) part of Celebes, in 1844. He died there in 1874 at the venerable age of ninety-six. The deportation of Hasan Maulani would seem to be only indirectly related to opposition to Islamic mysticism in the Preanger, and at any rate in this connection arguments of a general religious or more specific theological nature are few and diffuse. The decisive factor here would seem to have been that native indigenous officials sided with the colonial authorities against a very popular spiritual teacher who had a large following but whose support network did not extend beyond his home base.

One link of this network was Kiyahi Nurhakim of Pasir Wetan in the area of Banyumas, the southern part of Central Java. He was one of the (no doubt numerous) pupils of Hasan Maulani, and experienced a fate similar to that of his mentor. Nurhakim was a very popular teacher of mystical doctrines and medico-magical practices. Information concerning his teachings has come down to us in a text written by one of his students.¹⁵ This text summarises Nurhakim's teachings on the *martabat tujuh*, a doctrine of seven grades of being, a variation on the doctrine of emanation in five grades which originates with Ibn ʿArabī but has been modified in Southeast Asia.¹⁶ From the same text we know that Nurhakim taught a special recitation of the *shahāda*. The perfect man should pray the *ṣalāt dāʿim al-ḥaqq*, with the following modified *shahāda*: *Nafsī wāḥidī lā sharīka lahu lā ilāha illā ana*.¹⁷ Nurhakim also had his own explanation for

¹⁴ Ibid. 14.

¹⁵ Ibid. 112-128.

¹⁶ A.H. Johns, *Malay Sufism as illustrated in an Anonymous Collection of 17th-Century Tracts*, *JMBRAS* xxx (1957) 1-110; and *idem*, *The Gift addressed to the Spirit of the Prophet* (Canberra 1965).

¹⁷ Drewes, *Drie Javaanse Goeroe's* 126.

the *nafy-ithbāt* (the negation and affirmation): i.e. the first part of the *shahāda* (there is no god) and the second part (but God). Moreover, he promoted the typical Indonesian style of fasting: *mutih* (lit.: white, i.e. drinking plain or 'white' water only, eating white rice and eggs, and bathing at night in rivers). He organised a type of Sufi order, the Akmalīyya (probably named after *insān kāmil*, or Perfect Man), as the vehicle for his teachings. One of the signs of belonging to this sect was a (white) silver ring.

The first report about Nurhakim dates from 1862. On the occasion of the circumcision of his son, numerous groups of visitors from all over the area of Banyumas came to his house to pay him respect. The native ruler of the area reported Nurhakim's popularity to the Dutch resident and 'for the sake of law and order' it was decided in 1862 that Nurhakim should leave his village and live in Purwakarta. There he was required to reside in the *pekauman*, the quarter of the *kaum*, which surrounds the major mosque in larger towns, and is also the dwelling place of the pious Muslims.¹⁸ In 1866 Nurhakim was condemned to forced labour in Banyuwangi in East Java, following vague complaints by some of his (former) pupils. After his return to the areas of Banyumas in 1871, new accusations were brought against Nurhakim and it was even proposed to deport him to one of the outer islands of the Archipelago. The accusations concerned an 'effort to found an Islamic Sultanate and to defeat the colonial government'.¹⁹ But this time Nurhakim managed to evade condemnation: his case was dismissed because of lack of conclusive evidence. A central government official at Buitenzorg even noted that the accused was 'already very old and had led a very modest pious life during the last years and therefore should not be considered a real danger'.²⁰

A third mystic teacher who faced opposition and severe measures by the colonial government was Malangyuda — likewise from the area of Banyumas in Central Java. In this case, not only mystic teachings and a network of pupils loyal to these teachings were of significance, but a dimension of social protest on the part of poor, landless farmers was associated with the rise of Malangyuda and his adherents. Social protest combined with religious sentiment is the subject of a monograph by the Indonesian historian Sartono

¹⁸ G.F. Pijper, *Fragmenta Islamica* (Leiden 1934) 1-2.

¹⁹ Drewes, *Drie Javaanse Goeroe's* 41.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 49.

Kartodirdjo.²¹ In this study a number of messianic movements are analysed. Some of these are based on conceptions dealing with the Mahdī, whereas others are inspired by the traditional Javanese expectation of a righteous ruler, the *Ratu Adil*. Many other regional (proto-)nationalist movements involved a charismatic leader and made use of more or less magico-mystical Islamic elements. A good example of this is the war of Pangeran Antasari and his associate Sultan Kuning in Banjarmasin against expanding colonialism (1857-1863).²²

A major recent debate on the history of Indonesian Islam concerns the interpretation of the so-called Paderi-Reform in West-Sumatra between 1784 and 1837. Following earlier studies, modern scholars such as Dobbin,²³ Roff²⁴ and Kraus²⁵ have subsequently stressed economic factors, Wāhhābī connections, or Shāṭṭāriyya connections as influencing this movement. The first two of these factors need not exclude the possibility of Shāṭṭāriyya influence. The Paderi movement initially opposed the traditional feudal nobility of the region and — for different reasons — the Dutch and English colonial powers. All these targets of the opposition represent niches of economic domination and thus at least in part would seem to justify Dobbin's views, while still leaving room for Shāṭṭāriyya influence. On the other hand, Roff's emphasis on the Wāhhābī connection could imply the exclusion of Shāṭṭāriyya involvement. Yet in accordance with Roff's own observations, this connection should be evaluated with reference to the diverse receptions of Wāhhābī ideas in the various other Islamic lands. Thus, Wāhhābī inspiration in the Paderi movement would not necessarily exclude a Shāṭṭāriyya connection or involvement. Consequently, if Kraus' views could be further substantiated, the Paderi movement should rightly be classified as a case of a Sufi-inspired movement against feudalism and

²¹ Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java* (Kuala Lumpur/Oxford 1973).

²² P.J. Veth, 'Het Beratip Beamal in Banjarmasin', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indië*, 3e serie, iii (1869) 197-202; K. Steenbrink, *Beberapa Aspek tentang Islam di Indonesia, Abad ke-19* (Jakarta 1984) 46-51.

²³ Christine Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy: Central Sumatra 1784-1874* (London/Malmö 1983).

²⁴ William R. Roff, 'Islamic Movements: One of Many?', in William R. Roff (ed.), *Islam and the Political Economy of Meaning. Comparative Studies of Muslim Discourse* (London 1987) 31-52.

²⁵ Werner Kraus, *Zwischen Reform und Rebellion. Über die Entwicklung des Islam in Minangkabau (Westsumatra) zwischen den beiden Reformbewegungen der Padri (1837) und der Modernisten* (1908) (Wiesbaden 1984).

colonialism, and was itself opposed by the latter forces.²⁶

In his *History of Java*, first published in 1817, the British colonial ruler Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles wrote:

'Every Arab from Mecca, as well as every Javanese, who had returned from a pilgrimage thither, assumed on Java the character of a saint, and the credulity of the common people was such that they too often attributed to such persons supernatural powers. Thus respected it was not difficult for them to rouse the country to rebellion [...] The Mohammedan priests have almost invariably been found most active in every case of insurrection. Numbers of them, generally a mixed breed between the Arabs and the inlanders go about from state to state in the Eastern Islands and it is generally by their intrigues and exhortations that the native chiefs are stirred up to attack or massacre the Europeans, as infidels and intruders'.²⁷

According to this view, the greatest danger from the Islamic side are the *hājjs* and the wandering teachers, both Arab and indigenous. For a long time this remained the dominant opinion in the colonial government, which tried to control and to limit the practice of *hajj* throughout the nineteenth century. Sufi orders were perceived as a danger only after the beginning of the war in Aceh in 1873, when the Advisor to the Governor General for Native Affairs, Karel Frederik Holle (1829-1896), initiated a campaign of warnings and restrictions concerning the brotherhoods. The campaign enjoyed substantial political support after the revolt of Cillegon in 1888. This revolt, essentially against colonial taxation, had been backed by a network of nationalists who were members of the Qādiriyya wa-Naqshbandiyya brotherhood.²⁸

Concern over the potential danger of the Sufi brotherhoods explains the distribution, by order of the Governor General, of several thousand copies of a twenty-page anti-*ṭuruq* pamphlet in West Java in the eighteen-eighties. The pamphlet was based on a Malay translation from an Arabic tract written in 1853 by Salim b. °Abd Allāh b. Sumayr. The author of the pamphlet, who had also translated the Arabic tract, was Sayyid °Uthmān (b. °Abd Allāh b. °Aqīl b. Yaḥyā

²⁶ In a later phase of the movement the

Shattāriyya met with opposition, not from legalist or Wahhābī-inspired circles, but from the more 'orthodox' Naqshbandi movement which entered the country after 1850; see Martin van Bruinessen, 'The Origins and development of the Naqshbandi Order in Indonesia, *Der Islam* lxcii (1990) 150-179; and idem, *Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah di Indonesia* (Bandung 1992).

²⁷ Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java* (London 1817; repr. Kuala Lumpur 1978) ii, 3; cf. K. Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam. Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950* (Amsterdam/Atlanta 1993) 74.

²⁸ Sartono Kartodirdjo, *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1888. Its Conditions, Course and Sequel* ('s-Gravenhage 1966).

al-^cAlawī), one of the best known Muslims of the country. According to the pamphlet, the mystic orders as such are correct, but in this age, unlike the golden age of the great Muslims and mystics, no one can fulfill the high requirements of the mystic orders. All those now teaching mystic doctrines and practices only want to promote an easy and even immoral form of Islam (e.g. the practice of men and women chanting prayers in dark mosques together). They are after money, power and the attentions of women as well, and they neglect the basic duties of Islamic Law.

The idea to publish and distribute the pamphlet came from Dr. L.W.C. van den Berg, Government Advisor for Arab and Islamic Affairs. His proposal to this effect, which was accepted by the Governor General, elicited at least one negative response within the colonial administration. The Resident of Bandung unsuccessfully tried to ban the pamphlet by Sayyid ^cUthmān from his area on the grounds that it would stir up hatred between two groups of Muslims.

The publication and distribution of Sayyid ^cUthmān's tract was preceded by a series of events prompted by competition for office and notions of Sufi orders as an imminent threat to the European community, the latter idea being especially rooted in opposition to the Naqshbandiyya in Sukabumi and Cianjur in West Java. The *penghulus* of both these towns were members of the Naqshbandiyya and had their own circles of adherents. They were disapproved of by a small group of persons around the former *penghulu* of Banda Aceh who had been living in Sukabumi from 1880, following his removal from office by the Dutch. This person, Habib al-Sagaf,²⁹ aligned himself with the *penghulu* of Garut, Raden Muhammad Musa, who was a close friend of Karel Frederik Holle. Raden Muhammad and Holle had consistently warned against Islamic 'fanaticism'. They were particularly receptive to Habib al-Sagaf's view that Muslim officials who become involved in mystic practices present a serious threat to law and order. Habib al-Sagaf also alleged that the circles around the *penghulu* of Sukabumi and Cianjur were already hatching plans to kill all members of the European community in The Indies.

Habib al-Sagaf's opposition to the Naqshbandiyya as represented by the two *penghulus* may have arisen from other than theological motives: it appears that his ultimate goal was to replace one of them himself. Raden Muhammad in alliance with Holle certainly had his

²⁹ For details on his life, see K.A. Steenbrink, *Mencari Tuhan dengan Kacamata Barat. Kajian Kritis Mengenai Agama di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta 1988) 62-80.

own agenda: namely to have his son, who was disabled and without suitable employment, appointed in place of one of the two 'fanatical' *penghulus* — members of the Naqshbandiyya who had even refused to drink wine at a reception in the house of the Dutch Resident! From the Raden's point of view it was only natural that the colonial government should reward him for his loyal service as a Muslim leader who had co-operated with Holle for many years. Consequently, Holle wrote several reports about this 'dangerous case of mystic fanatics' to the Resident of Bandung, who was not impressed, and to the Governor-General, who eventually ordered the distribution of the pamphlet by Sayyid 'Uthmān. The Resident subsequently accused Holle and his friend the *penghulu* Raden Muhammad Musa of conspiring against the Naqshbandiyya solely for the purpose of securing a job for Muhammad Musa's disabled son. In the end, however, it was Habib al-Sagaf alone who was summoned to Batavia to defend himself in a lawcourt for his role in the affair.³⁰

This case of opposition to Naqshbandī groups clearly indicates a lack of consensus on the part of the colonial administration concerning the real or potential danger constituted by Sufi orders. More generally, the case demonstrates how opposition to Sufism may mask ulterior motives, such as competition for lucrative and influential office. With regard to its origins, ramifications and alliances, the whole affair vividly illustrates the fallacy of assuming the existence of a simple, black and white religious or ideological dichotomy between Sufism and its opponents.

Unlike Holle whose notions were rather confused, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, the latter's successor as Advisor for Native and Islamic Affairs (in Indonesia between 1889-1906), made a sharp distinction between peaceful, loyal mystics on the one hand, and the small groups which used mystic networks for nationalist, subversive activities. In the debate between mystical and legalist Islam, Snouck Hurgronje actually even sided with the mystics against the legalists and ritualists. In a letter of 10 June 1904 to the Resident of Banyumas concerning certain mystic teachers and their writings, he states that these persons were 'absolutely safe, viewed from the political standpoint; this mysticism even accords a greater place to humanitarian and tolerant concepts than orthodox Islam does'.³¹

³⁰ The affair had no sequel; see Steenbrink, op. cit. 59-82 where some relevant Malay documents from the Jakarta Archives are published.

³¹ Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *Ambtelijke Adviezen* ('s-Gravenhage 1959) 1216.

Thus, the first western scholar of Islam who undertook a profound study of Islamic law also showed himself to be an outspoken defender of Islamic mysticism.

CONTROVERSIES AND POLEMICS INVOLVING THE SUFI ORDERS IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY INDONESIA

MARTIN VAN BRUINESSEN

The controversies and polemics which will be discussed in this article all occurred within the context of the larger ongoing process of Islamic reform, the struggle against local custom and other alleged *bid'at* in belief and practice. This does not mean, however, that Sufis and reformists at any one time constituted two opposed blocks. In many of the cases under review, we shall find Sufi shaykhs pitted not against anti-Sufi reformists but against other Sufis; some of the fiercest debates, as we shall see below, in fact took place inside one of the Sufi orders, the Naqshbandiyya.

For an adequate understanding of the various conflicts between Indonesian Sufis and their opponents during the past century, it is useful first to take a closer look at the dynamics of the relationship between the Indonesian *umma* and the Holy Cities in the Ḥijāz. The observations which follow are no doubt valid for many other regions of the Muslim world as well (as is evident from several other contributions in this volume).

Both the Sufis and the reformists, at least until 1925, drew their inspiration from the centre of the Muslim world, Mecca and secondarily Medina. The most influential members of both camps had spent many years studying there and owed their influence in Indonesia primarily to this fact. At least since the seventeenth century and possibly earlier, there had been a community of Indonesian students and scholars in the Holy Cities, who acted as the chief mediators between the heartlands of Islam and their lands of origin. By the end of the nineteenth century, this community had grown to several thousand adults. Snouck Hurgronje, to whose fieldwork in Mecca we owe much of what we know about this community, observed that it constituted 'the heart of the religious life of the entire East Indian Archipelago, pumping fresh blood to the entire body of the Indonesian *umma* through ever more veins at an ever increasing pace'.¹

¹ C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*, ii vols; Bd. ii: *Aus dem heutigen Leben* (Haag 1889)

With one or two dubious exceptions, all Indonesian branches of Sufi orders (*tarekats*) were introduced into the Archipelago from Mecca or Medina, usually by returning students.² Even such orders as the Shaṭṭāriyya and Indian branches of the Naqshbandiyya reached Indonesia not directly from India but from the Ḥaramayn. Moreover, the Indonesian branches of the great Sufi orders that were thus established never became fully independent and self-sustaining. Such was the prestige of the Holy Cities that the *khalīfas* of Indonesian shaykhs usually went to the Ḥijāz to obtain yet another *ijāza* from a Meccan or Medinan teacher. This procedure constituted an effective check on the ever-present tendencies towards syncretism and the assimilation of indigenous mystical traditions into *taṣawwuf*. In each generation there were *tarekat* teachers who thus reestablished the links of their order with the Arabian source.

In this context it is not surprising that some of the returning *tarekat* teachers also gained reputations as reformists. In fact, virtually all of the protagonists in Azyumardi Azra's recent study of seventeenth and eighteenth-century Indonesian reformists³ are Sufis, affiliated with one or more *tarekats*. It should be noted, however, that Azra uses the term 'reformist' in a wider sense than most other scholars; in his study it refers above all to efforts to replace monist mysticism by explicitly transcendentalist and sharia-based belief and practice. Even in the period of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century reform, when in the Middle East much reformist zeal was directed against popular religious practices associated with the Sufi orders, some Sufi teachers returning from Mecca acted as *de facto* religious reformers in Indonesia.

It is not difficult to understand why this was so. For the sake of analysis we may distinguish two independent components in what appears to be religious reform from a Southeast-Asian perspective.

391.

² The exceptions were a possible early Shaṭṭāri influence in Aceh and the introduction of the Rifā'iyya and the Qādiriyya there by the Indian Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānīri. The Khalwatiyya was first introduced by Yusuf Makassar, who had studied in Medina for many years but 'took' this particular order in Damascus. For an overview of the development of the various orders, see Martin van Bruinessen, 'The origins and development of Sufi orders (*tarekat*) in Southeast Asia', *Studia Islamika, Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* i, no.1 (1994) 1-23.

³ Azyumardi Azra, *The Transmission of Islamic reformism to Indonesia: networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian 'ulamā' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Ph.D. Diss., Columbia University, New York 1992).

The most important component was the effort to bring belief and practice of the Indonesian Muslims more in line with that of the Muslims of Arabia, especially the inhabitants of the Holy Cities, whose religion was assumed to be purer and more authentic. The second component, the importance of which has tended to be exaggerated by outside observers, derives from the various reformist and revivalist movements in the Middle East, from the Wahhābiyya and the Salafiyya to more recent movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood and even the Iranian revolution. The introduction into Indonesia of such great Sufi orders as the Naqshbandiyya, Khalwatiyya, Qādiriyya and initially even the Shattāriyya was part of the first component of this ongoing process of reform. Their role in bringing religious life in the Archipelago more in line with current Sunni orthodoxy and orthopraxis is clearly brought out in Azra's study.

Students and pilgrims returning from Arabia brought back more than bookish learning and Sufi devotional practices. Numerous elements of Arabian (as well as Egyptian and Indian) popular religion and lore encountered in the Holy Cities were disseminated this way and little by little came to be integrated into Southeast-Asian local custom (*adat*) and belief. Sociological studies of Java in the nineteen-fifties have drawn attention to a cultural and political cleavage dividing society into 'strict' and 'nominal' Muslims, or *santri* and *abangan* in the terms popularised by Clifford Geertz.⁴ The 'strict' Muslims, and foreign observers who followed their lead, have tended to characterise all *abangan* religious beliefs and practices as pre-Islamic (or non-Islamic) but on closer inspection it soon becomes evident that many elements of these beliefs and practices derive from the Muslim world and are due to an earlier phase in the process of Islamicisation.⁵ The *santri-abangan* cleavage of the nineteen-fifties

⁴ It is probably not Geertz but Robert Jay, *Santri and abangan, religious schism in rural Central Java* (Cambridge, Mass. 1957) who should be credited with first having introduced these terms into the scholarly literature. Geertz' work, however, has had a much greater impact. Although Geertz' analyses have been subjected to much criticism, at least some of which is justified, his description of religious behaviour in Java [*The religion of Java* (New York 1960)] remains a very valuable study.

⁵ Many of these allegedly non-Islamic practices are also recorded in two orientalist classics which discuss popular religion in Egypt and Algeria, respectively: Edward William Lane's *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*; and Edmond

and nineteen-sixties probably owed much to the politicisation of society in that period. In earlier periods, colonial sources do mention 'fanatical' *hajjis* and *sayyids* representing sharia-based (and sometimes anti-Dutch) Islam, but the common believers apparently constituted a continuum from the superficially to the highly Islamicised.

The debates between Indonesian Sufis and their opponents that will be discussed below took place within the '*santri*' segment of this spectrum. Certain Sufi ideas, however, have appealed to, and been adopted by, much wider circles. Elements of al-Ḥallāj's and Ibn 'Arabi's monist mysticism, the concept of *nūr Muḥammad* and the idea of parallelism between macrocosm and microcosm, were easily assimilated by the older mystical traditions of local or Indic origin. The resulting syncretic mysticism, presently known as *kebatinan*, 'esotericism', accepts what it perceives as the inner dimension of Islamic teachings but rejects the sharia as an irrelevant formality. This *kebatinan* mysticism constitutes an important part of the context in which the debates on Sufism in Indonesia took place. Some reformists have accused *tarekats* of being no more than heterodox *kebatinan* movements, the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* providing a pretext for laxity in worship. *Tarekat* teachers, on the other hand, have been forced to define and legitimise their positions as different from those of both the reformists and the syncretists.⁶

During the nineteenth century the most important aspect of the context was clearly Dutch colonial expansion, which often met with local (Muslim) resistance and in the early twentieth century actually gave rise to the emergence of an Indonesian nationalist movement. After independence, as we shall see below, polemics on Sufism became embedded within the political struggle at the national level. Dutch colonialism, which had been established in Java and the Moluccas much earlier, went through a period of expansion in the second half of the nineteenth century; only by the early twentieth

Doutté's *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*.

⁶ The response of *kebatinan* mystics to Muslim reformism is outside the scope of this article. The second half of the nineteenth century was a period of significant expansion of scripturalist and sharia-oriented Islam at the expense of syncretism. In reaction to reformist agitation, the indifferent attitude of certain *kebatinan* circles towards the sharia and its representatives turned distinctly hostile, resulting in the production of anti-Muslim literature; see e.g. G.W.J. Drewes 'The struggle between Javanism and Islam as illustrated by the Serat Dermaganḍul', *Bijdragen tot de Land-, Taal- en Volkenkunde* cxvii (1966) 309-65. This assertive response never affected Sufi apologetics, however.

century was all of present-day Indonesia brought under effective Dutch control. During this same period, the number of Indonesians performing the *hajj* appears to have risen rapidly, reaching annual averages of 6,000 by 1880 and 15,000 by 1910. Likewise during the same period, there was an increase in the number of Arab traders, especially from Ḥaḍramawt, who travelled to the Archipelago and settled there, often taking up positions as religious teachers. These returning *hajis* and Arab traders, especially the *sayyids* among the latter, constituted a potential counter-elite, competing for influence with the established religious authorities and, occasionally, with the indigenous nobility. Many of the debates and controversies which we shall deal with below can only be properly understood in the context of rivalry between religious leaders of different backgrounds.

On repeated occasions in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we find several of the popular *tarekats* in Indonesia — the Sammāniyya, the Qādiriyya wa-Naqshbandiyya, and once even the Shaṭṭāriyya — cast in the role of vehicles of social protest and resistance against Dutch colonial expansion. This was not so much a reflection of any specific anticolonial doctrines but was due to the internal structure of these *tarekats*, the mass following they had acquired, and the expectations that this mass following had of the magical effectiveness of the devotions taught by the *tarekats*.

The Sammāniyya was probably the first *tarekat* ever to gain a mass following in Indonesia, towards the close of the eighteenth century. By the mid-nineteenth century it was overshadowed by the Qādiriyya wa-Naqshbandiyya, a quite similar new eclectic order established by a Mecca-based Indonesian teacher, Ahmad Khatib Sambas (Aḥmad b. °Abd al-Ghaffār al-Khaṭīb al-Sambasī). In the second half of the nineteenth century the Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya gradually became the most important of the orders, the *zāwiya* on Jabal Abū Qubays developing into the centre of a dense network covering Sumatra, Java and the other islands. It retained this position until the Sa°ūdī conquest of Mecca, which constitutes an important watershed in the history of Indonesian Islam.

The popularity of the Sammāniyya and the Qādiriyya wa-Naqshbandiyya no doubt was to a large extent due to the reputation of Shaykh Sammān and °Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī for supernatural intervention on behalf of their devotees. The loud, ecstatic *dhikr* of these orders and the invulnerability it was believed to impart were factors

which impelled these *tarekats* towards their roles in anticolonial and anti-aristocratic rebellions. Contrary to what one might assume in retrospect, in their heyday these orders never ran into opposition from circles of *fuqahā*⁷. In fact, their Indonesian pioneers, Abdussamad Palembang (ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Fālimbānī) and Ahmad Khatib Sambas, were equally renowned as scholars of both *fiqh* and *taṣawwuf*.⁷ It is only much later, from the nineteen-twenties on, that we encounter reformists who frown upon ecstatic *dhikr* and belief in the intercession of the saints.

Surprisingly, it was the comparatively austere Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya which first encountered stiff opposition from *fuqahā*.⁸ A brief look at the first polemics will indicate that we have a conflict here between two new types of religious leaders attempting to establish their authority rather than a properly theological debate.

Arabs from Ḥaḍramawt had been visiting the Indies for centuries as traders, often doubling as teachers of Islam, but until the nineteenth century their numbers had been rather limited. It was in the first half of the nineteenth century that their numbers began to increase rapidly and that they — especially the sayyids among them — successfully established themselves among the Indonesians as superior religious authorities.⁹

In the early eighteenthfifties the West Sumatran Ismail Minangkabau (Ismāʿīl al-Minangkabawī) returned to the Archipelago from Mecca, where he had become an assistant and *khalīfa* to Mawlānā Khālīd's

⁷ Judging by the collections of *isnād* published by the late dean of the (Indonesian) Dār al-ʿulūm al-dīniyya in Mecca, Shaykh Yasin Padang (Yāsīn al-Fadānī), ʿAbd al-Ṣamad's name occurs as frequently in the *isnād* of *fiqh* texts studied by Indonesian ʿulamāʾ as in those of *taṣawwuf* works; see e.g. Muḥammad Yāsīn b. Muḥammad ʿĪsā al-Fadānī, *al-ʿIqd al-farīd min jawāhir al-asānīd* (Surabaya 1401/1981). The only extant biographical notice on Ahmad Khatib Sambas, in a work on Meccan ulama of the fourteenth century of the hijra, describes him as a *faqīh*, who had studied with the most prominent Meccan representatives of the Shāfiʿī, Ḥanafī and Mālikī *madhhab*; see ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *Siṣyar wa-tarājim baʿḍ ʿulamāʾ inā fiʾl-qarn al-rābiʿ ʿashar liʾl-hijra* (Mecca 1385) 74.

⁸ I deliberately leave aside the earlier conflicts between 'government' ulama and 'heterodox' mystics described by Steenbrink in this volume, which may have been of a similar nature but which do not appear to have involved any of the great orders.

⁹ L.W.C. van den Berg, *Le Hadramout et les colonies arabes dans l'archipel indien* (Batavia 1886).

Meccan *khalīfa* °Abd Allāh al-Arzinjānī.¹⁰ He was welcomed with great honours by the highest indigenous authorities in Singapore and was soon invited to the court of peninsular Riau, one of the last independent indigenous kingdoms, where the entire ruling family became his disciples. He travelled as far north as the Malay state of Kedah and apparently found a following on the island of Penang as well.¹¹ These successes must have provided one of the leading Arab scholars then residing in Singapore, Sālim b. °Abdallāh b. Sumayr al-Ḥaḍramī, with the immediate impetus for writing a polemical tract against him.¹² He accused Ismā'īl of spreading false doctrines, but did not appear to attack the *tarekat* as such.

No copies of Sālim b. °Abdallāh b. Sumayr's tract appear to be extant but it was in part incorporated in another anti-Naqshbandī polemical tract written three decades later by the leading Arab °ālim of Batavia in the eighteen-eighties, Sayyid Usman (°Uthmān b. °Abd Allāh b. °Aqīl b. Yaḥyā al-°Alawī), who was much concerned over the growing influence of charismatic Naqshbandī teachers in West Java.¹³ Both Arab authors attempted to render the authority of the *tarekat* shaykhs illegitimate by asserting that the latter were deficient in religious learning (as well as lacking Arab blood, but this was not stated explicitly), and that they accepted as their disciples all sorts of people who had insufficient knowledge of the fundamentals of Is-

¹⁰ See Martin van Bruinessen 'The origins and development of the Naqshbandī order in Indonesia', *Der Islam* lxvii, (1990) 150-79; *Tarekat Naqsyabandīyah di Indonesia* (2nd revised edition, Bandung 1994).

¹¹ K.F. Holle, 'Mededeelingen over de devotie der Naqsjibendijah in de Ned. Indischen archipel', *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* xxxi (1886) 67, 69-78.

¹² Sālim b. °Abd Allāh b. Sumayr (d. 1883 in Batavia) is still known in Indonesia for his simple Malay textbook of *fiqh* and doctrine, *Safinat al-najāt*, which is still used today and on which several Indonesian ulama have written commentaries; see Martin van Bruinessen, 'Kitab kuning: books in Arabic script used in the pesantren milieu', *BKL* cxlvi (1990) 226-69; 248.

¹³ On Sayyid Usman and his anti-Naqshbandī treatises see: Chr. Snouck Hurgronje, 'Een Arabische bondgenoot der Nederlandsch-Indische regeering'. *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap* xxxi (1887) 41-63 [reprinted in *Verspreide Geschriften* iv/1, 69-85]; A.F. von de Wall, 'Kort begrip van de beteekenis van de tarekat naar het Maleisch van Sajid Oesman bin Abdoellah ibn Akil ibn Jahja, adviseur honorair voor Arabische zaken', *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* xxxv (1893) 223-7. Snouck summarises the pamphlets *al-Naṣiḥa al-anīqa li'l-mutalabbisin bi'l-tariqa* and *al-Wathīqa al-wafīyya fi 'uluww sha'n tariqat al-šūfiyya*; see also von de Wall on a later pamphlet *Arti tarekat dengan pendek bicaranya* ['The meaning of the tarekat in a nutshell' (Batavia 1889)], which appears to be largely if not entirely identical with the former.

lam. Whereas Sālim b. °Abd Allāh b. Sumayr's pamphlet of 1853 had been an indictment of the person of Ismā'īl al-Mīnangkabawī, Sayyid Usman directed his anger at the most influential contemporary Naqshbandī teacher in Mecca, Sulaymān al-Zuhdī who, on the basis of a summary training in his *zāwiya*, had given numerous Indonesian *hajis* an *ijāza* as Naqshbandī adepts and assigned *khalīfas* to many parts of the Archipelago.

Sayyid Usman emphasised, in a later pamphlet, that his criticism was not directed against *taṣawwuf* and the *tarekats* as such, but against what he saw as their degeneration in modern times, and against teachers who, out of sheer greed, claimed spiritual powers they did not have and cheated their gullible *murīds*. The recitation of *dhikr* and *wirds* was, in the sayyid's view, a meritorious act, but one did not need an *ijāza* from a shaykh in order to do this and these were purely devotional utterances, not magical formulas as many Indonesians believed. In order to break the shaykhs' monopoly on such pious formulas, Sayyid Usman undertook to publish a booklet containing prayers and *wirds* allegedly taught by the Prophet himself.

Consequently, the above-mentioned Arab authors did not oppose Sufism in general but only certain (in their view) would-be Sufis who failed to meet the high standards required of proper Sufis. The next generation of critics went much further; they condemned the most central doctrines and practices of the Naqshbandiyya as *bid'ā* and *shirk*. This attack no longer targeted specific teachers but the *tarekats* as such, along with many other traditionalist Islamic practices.

The most forceful attack came from Ahmad Khatib (Aḥmad b. °Abd al-Laṭīf al-Khaṭīb al-Mīnangkabawī, 1852-1915), one of the Minangkabau (West Sumatran) ulama who resided in Mecca, and who is especially known for his virulent criticism of the matrilineal *adat* of his own ethnic group.¹⁴ In the years 1906-1908 he wrote three Malay tracts against the Naqshbandiyya, which were to provide the source material for most subsequent anti-Naqshbandī polemics in Sumatra. The titles alone give an idea of the rhetorical tone which

¹⁴ Ahmad Khatib Minangkabau (on whom see °Abd al-Jabbār, *Siṣyar* 37-44) is generally considered as the father of Indonesian twentieth-century reformism and an uncompromising opponent of all forms of *bid'ā*. In matters of *fiqh*, however, he remained within the Shāfi'i *madhhab*.

Ahmad Khatib adopts: 'Exposure of the deceivers' counterfeit in their imitation of the just', 'Clear proofs to the righteous for the extirpation of the superstitions of certain fanatics', 'The sharp-cutting sword that eradicates the utterances of certain presumptuous persons'.¹⁵ He first argues that the very idea of special instruction given by the Prophet to Abū Bakr, and handed down through the chain of *tarekat* teachers, is extremely unlikely, because no such thing is mentioned in any sources other than those of the Naqshbandiyya itself. Next, he discusses the various devotions of the Naqshbandiyya: *dhikr*, *laṭā'if*, *sulūk* (*khalwa*), *khatm-i khwājagān*, and *rābiṭa bi'l-shaykh*, as well as the injunction to refrain from eating meat during periods of intense spiritual exercise. He shows to his own satisfaction that these had all been introduced by later mystics, and were therefore without basis in the practice of the Prophet and the Companions. Inventing such devotions on one's own initiative, he holds, amounts to a denial of the divine commands and is consequently an extremely reprehensible form of *bid'ā*.

Ahmad Khatib's attacks had a great impact in his native West Sumatra, which at that time was probably the region with the highest density of Naqshbandī shaykhs in the Archipelago. His writings were at once countered with apologetic tracts by the Minangkabau Naqshbandī shaykhs Muḥammad Sa'd b. Tanta' of Mungka and Khatib Ali (Muḥammad 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib), who had even been Ahmad Khatib's own student. These Malay tracts reiterated the standard arguments of Arabic apologetic literature purporting to demonstrate the scriptural foundations of Naqshbandī ritual, arguments which were new to Indonesian audiences and apparently not sufficient to counter Ahmad Khatib's criticisms.¹⁶ Aware that the

¹⁵ *Izhār zaghl al-kādhībīn fī tashabbuhihim bi'l-ṣādiqīn; al-Āyāt al-bayyināt li'l-munṣifīn fī izālat khurāfāt ba'd al-muta'aṣṣibīn; al-Sayf al-battār fī maḥq kalimāt ba'd ahl al-ighthirār* (all three in Malay). Printed together Cairo 1326/1908; several reprints. These works are discussed in B. Schrieke, 'Bijdrage tot de bibliografie van de huidige godsdienstige beweging ter Sumatra's Westkust', *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* lix (1921) 249-325 and William G. Shellabear, 'An exposure of counterfeiters', *The Moslem World* xx (1930) 359-370. The first of these tracts was republished in Latinised script as recently as 1978 in A.Mm. Arief (ed.), *Fatwa tentang: Tharikat Naqasyabandiyah* (4th printing, Medan). 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Siṣyar* 43, also mentions an Arabic anti-Naqshbandī tract, *Tanbih al-ghāfil bi-sulūk ṭarīqat al-awā'il*.

¹⁶ The tracts are briefly discussed in Schrieke, 'Bijdrage' 270-2. Shaykh Sa'd b. Tanta' wrote *Irghām unūf al-muta'annitīn fī inkārihim rābiṭat al-wāṣilīn* and the more elaborate

greatest threat did not lie so much in the rational arguments put forward by their opponent as in his high prestige, some Naqshbandī requested another great authority, Sayyid Usman, who was known to dislike Ahmad Khatib, to write a refutation of the latter's *Izhār*. The Arab scholar sent them a copy of one of his own anti-Naqshbandī tracts, which obviously cannot have been much help.

Ahmad Khatib's arguments were to be reiterated by many subsequent critics, and even in much later periods Naqshbandī shaykhs still felt the need to write refutations of Ahmad Khatib's works. The most recent example known to me was published in 1981.¹⁷

Not long after the appearance of Ahmad Khatib's tracts, the influence of the Egyptian reformists also began to spread in Indonesia, and with it a more radical rejection of *taqlīd* and *wasīla*, principles without which no *tarekat* is conceivable. A new generation of radical reformists, who came to be known as the *kaum muda*, the 'young generation', assertively set the terms for the debate. They challenged the traditionalists in public debates, frequently using exceptionally scornful language. In their journal *al-Munīr* — the name is a tribute to their primary source of inspiration, *al-Manār* — they attacked numerous traditional practices such as rituals concerning the dead, audible pronunciation of the *niyya* before prayer, exclusively determining the start and finish of a month by *ru'ya*, and performing the *zuhr* prayer after the Friday prayers if there were fewer than the requisite forty participants. Among the *tarekat*-related practices that the journal specifically targeted were *ziyāra*, especially if the purpose was to fulfill a vow or request intercession, mentally visualising the shaykh in order to establish spiritual rapport (*rābiṭa bi'l-shaykh*), reciting *dhikr* according to certain specifications (*kayfiyya*) to acquire specific desired results, and reciting it rhythmically and/or in

Risālat tanbīh al-ʿawāmm ʿalā taghrīrāt baʿḍ al-anām (Padang 1326/1908). Shaykh Khatib Ali first published a Malay translation of an apologetic treatise by Sayyid Muḥammad b. Maḥdī al-Kurdī, *Risāla naqshīyya fī asās iṣṭilāḥ al-naqshbandīyya min al-dhikr al-khafī wa'l-rābiṭa wa'l-murāqaba wa-difāʿ al-iʿtirāḍ bi-dhālik* (Padang 1326/1908), and an adaptation of ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's *Miftāḥ al-maʿiyya*, titled *Kitāb Miftāḥ al-ṣādiqīyya fī iṣṭilāḥ al-naqshbandīyya* (Padang).

¹⁷ Haji Yahya bin Laksemana, *Lisan Naqshbandīyah: untuk membanteras risala bagi Syekh Ahmad Khatib* ('The tongue of the Naqshbandīyya: to annihilate the tract by Shaykh Ahmad Khatib'), (Kajang, Selangor, Malaysia, 1981). It takes up point by point the issues raised in *Izhār zaḡhl al-kādhībīn*.

accordance with a given melody.¹⁸ One of the most learned and fiercest polemicists contributing to *al-Munīr* was a student of Ahmad Khatib, Abdul Karim b. Muhammad Amrullah alias Haji Rasul (in retrospect best remembered as the father of the famous modernist Muslim leader Hamka). He wrote two tracts in which he attacked the Naqshbandiyya and in particular the Naqshbandī apologist Khatib Ali, even more sharply than his teacher had done.¹⁹

Ironically, a generation earlier it had been Naqshbandī shaykhs who had come into conflict with local tradition in this region, opposing both the *adat* authorities and the more ‘indigenised’ Shattāriyya *tarekat* in the name of scripturalist Islam.²⁰ Forced onto the defensive by the more radical reformists, several Naqshbandī shaykhs entered into new alliances with the *adat*-faction.

A more moderate criticism of the Naqshbandiyya was undertaken by Shaykh Muhammad Jamil Jambek (1862-1947), who had also been a student of Ahmad Khatib in Mecca but had studied with several other traditionalist teachers as well. He published a two-volume work on the Naqshbandiyya which owes much to Ahmad Khatib but on the whole presents a more balanced description of the *tarekat* and is more careful in formulating criticism.²¹ One of his arguments exploits the fact that Naqshbandī sources portray their *tarekat* as being based not only on a *silsila* going back to Abū Bakr but on a parallel one going back to °Alī as well — the two coming together in the person of Abū °Alī al-Fārmadī. Jambek concludes that this invalidates their claim that the *tarekat* preserves the special teachings of Muḥammad to Abū Bakr. He also points out the chronological gaps that exist between successive *murshids* in the early part of the Naqshbandiyya *silsila*, while noting that the theory of initiation by the *rūḥāniyya* of a predecessor is extremely unconvincing.

¹⁸ On the conflicts between the *kaum muda* and the traditional ulama or *kaum tua*, and specifically on *al-Munīr* see Hamka *Ayahku: Riwayat hidup Dr. H. Abdul Karim Amrullah dan perjuangan kaum muda agama di Sumatera* (4th ed., Jakarta 1982) 99-111.

¹⁹ *Izhār asāfir al-muḍallin fī tashabbuhihim bi'l-muhtadīn and al-Suyūf al-qāṭi'a fī 'l-da'āwī al-kādhība*, both in Malay (Schrieke, 'Bijdrage' 313).

²⁰ B. Schrieke, 'Bijdrage tot de bibliografie van de huidige godsdienstige beweging ter Sumatra's Westkust', *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* lix (1921) 263-5.

²¹ Muhammad Jamil Jambek, *Penerangan tentang asal usul tarekat an-naqsyabandiyah dan segala yang berhubungan dengan dia* ('Explanations on the origins of the Naqshbandi order and everything related to it') ii vols. [Bukittinggi n.d. (1930s?)].

Similarly he scrutinises the Koranic verses and the *hadīths* adduced by Naqshbandī apologists in defense of their devotions and rituals, and concludes that the apologists have had recourse to self-serving, idiosyncratic forms of exegesis for which there is no proper justification. His criticism does not imply a wholesale rejection of the *tarekat* but sounds more like an appeal for its reform.

Discussion of the polemics in West Sumatra has taken us ahead in time. We shall return to Java now and to the first decades of the present century. The first two major reformist organisations were both established in Java, *Muhammadiyah* in Yogyakarta in 1912 and *Al Irsyad* in Batavia (Jakarta) in 1913. *Muhammadiyah* was primarily a benevolent association, which set up schools and later also hospitals, and worked hard to raise religious awareness among the Javanese and inculcate moral values through public sermons (*tabligh*). Its founding members hailed from circles close to the court at Yogyakarta, an environment which was known to be syncretistic. Around 1925, the first important *Muhammadiyah* branch outside Java was established in West Sumatra by the aforementioned Minangkabau reformist Haji Rasul. His numerous students helped the organisation to spread rapidly through the entire region.

Much of *Muhammadiyah*'s energies was directed at reforming practices which were part of everyday religious life in Java but which the organisation considered as alien to Islam. This included numerous practices which were important to *tarekat* followers, such as *ziyāra* (visiting graves, especially to request favours), the *slametan* (ritual meal, involving symbolic food-offerings to the spirits of the deceased) and all forms of Islamic magic. *Muhammadiyah* has not, to my knowledge, come into conflict with any *tarekat* as such — although numerous *Muhammadiyah* members tend to be quite scornful of the *tarekats* as representing primitive misconceptions of Islam. In fact, *Muhammadiyah* has never had any serious objections to Ghazālīan forms of Sufism, and in recent times it is not unusual in *Muhammadiyah* mosques for prayers to be concluded with a brief *dhikr*.²²

²² See the observations by Mitsuo Nakamura, 'Professor Haji Kahar Muzakkir and the development of the Muslim reformist movement in Indonesia', in B.R.O'G. Anderson et al., *Religion and social ethos in Indonesia* (Clayton, Vict, 1977) 1-20 on the performance of *dhikr*

Al Irsyad was born of a conflict within the conservative Arab benevolent association *Djamiat Chair* (*al-Jam'īyya al-khayriyya*). The reformists, led by the Sudanese teacher Ahmad Surkati, broke away and established their own educational organisation, strongly influenced by the Egyptian reformists, Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā. Its membership in practice consisted exclusively of Indonesian Arabs, but its influence spread well beyond that circle, which was especially due to the high degree of respect enjoyed by Surkati. *Al Irsyad* was a distinctly non-Sufi organisation, but it never made Sufi practices a major target of its reformist aims.²³

In Java it was not Muslim reformism as such but nationalism that caused the *tarekats* to lose a considerable part of their following. The first nationalist mass organisation, *Sarekat Islam* (established in 1912), found a devoted following in precisely those social circles which had been the recruiting grounds for the *tarekats*. Initially an organisation of Muslim traders, it soon passed into the control of modernist Muslim nationalists and gained a vast following among Java's peasant masses who flocked to it often with strong millenarian expectations.²⁴

By the end of the nineteen-tens the membership of many local *Sarekat Islam* branches overlapped with the following of *tarekat* shaykhs. Some *tarekat* shaykhs in fact became *Sarekat* branch-presidents. Conflict between the two types of leaders of the *umma*, the nationalist politicians and the traditionalist *tarekat* shaykhs, was virtually inevitable, as each group thought the other was attempting to subvert its authority. B.J.O. Schrieke, who at the time was the

by his *Muhammadiyah* respondents. During the last few decades, *Muhammadiyah* reformists and traditionalists have at times reached surprising forms of accommodation. In the nineteen-seventies and nineteen-eighties, there was in West Sumatra a Naqshbandī shaykh who was also an active *Muhammadiyah* member (personal communication from Dr. M. Sanusi Latief, Padang).

²³ '[Surkati] had no objections [...] against al-Ghazālī's *taṣawwuf*, but he did object to certain extreme expressions of Sufism and of certain *ṭuruq*'; see G.F. Pijper, 'Het reformisme in de Indonesische archipel, in id., *Studiën over de geschiedenis van de Islam in Indonesia, 1900-1950* (Leiden 1977) 97-145, 120.

²⁴ The millenarian aspect of *Sarekat Islam* in its first years is especially emphasised in A.E. Korver's study *Sarekat Islam 1912-1916* (Ph.D. Diss., University of Amsterdam 1982). Takashi Shiraishi, *An age in motion: popular radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca 1990), concentrating on a later period, focuses on the political radicalism to which one *Sarekat* wing owed much popular support.

Dutch Indies government's adviser on native and Muslim affairs, gives a lively account of the power struggle between certain branch-leaders on the island of Madura, who were also *tarekat* shaykhs, and the reform-minded central board members in nearby Surabaya.²⁵ In due course this conflict took on the appearance of a doctrinal one between Muslim reformism and the *tarekats*, with accusations of false teachings and cheating, etc. on both sides, but the power struggle between two classes of leaders clearly remained an underlying element of major importance.

As elsewhere in Indonesia there was a certain — though far from strict — correlation between Muslim modernism and reformism on the one hand, and nationalist activism on the other. In the mid-nineteen-twenties, the *Sarekat Islam* leaders became involved in Muslim internationalism. They convened a series of All-Islam Congresses, in which most currents of Indonesian Islam were represented and at which matters of common interest were discussed.²⁶ Many of these matters concerned developments abroad, notably the rise of anti-imperialist movements among Muslims. Neither the sultan-caliph Mehmed V Reshād nor the Sharīf Ḥusayn, both seen as British stooges, evoked much sympathy among Indonesia's Muslim politicians. It was Mustafa Kemal and °Abd al-°Azīz Ibn Sa°ūd whom they saw not only as the saviours of their own nations but as the potential new leaders of the entire Muslim world.

In 1926, however, when the Indonesian All-Islam Congress was invited to send a delegation to the first Muslim World Congress in Mecca, sponsored by Ibn Sa°ūd, its participants were divided over the attitude to adopt towards Ibn Sa°ūd's suppression of traditional religious teachings and practices (*taqlīd*, *ziyāra*, etc.). Traditionalists demanded that the delegates plead with Ibn Sa°ūd for tolerance, but those who were modernist and reform-minded were little inclined to defend practices which they actually disapproved of themselves. This dilemma caused the traditionalists to break away and establish their own organisation, *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU). This was not explicitly an organisation of Sufis, and it was not associated with any

²⁵ B. Schrieke, *Aanteekeningen over Madura*. Manuscript, western no. 885, KITLV collection (Leiden 1919).

²⁶ See M. van Bruinessen, 'Muslims of the Dutch East Indies and the caliphate question', *Studia Islamika, Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* ii, no.3 (1995) 115-140, where the developments briefly sketched here are discussed in greater detail.

specific *tarekat*, but most of its leaders practised at least privately some Sufi-type devotions. NU, primarily based in Java, developed into the largest grassroots organisation in the Muslim world.²⁷

The establishment of *Nahdlatul Ulama* was a traditionalist reaction to reformism but at the same time it represented an important innovation in traditional Muslim circles. The most respected traditional ‘*ālim* of the time, Hasjim Asj’ari, had to issue a fatwa with numerous Koranic quotations to demonstrate the licitness of establishing such a modern-type association of ulama. Not surprisingly perhaps, the association itself became a channel for moderate reform, especially in the area of education.

The same was true of the Minangkabau-based traditionalist association, *Perti* (*Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah*, Association for Muslim Education), which was formally established in 1930.²⁸ *Perti*’s founders were involved in educational reform, but in matters of doctrine and worship they tended to be more traditionalist than their Javanese counterparts. Naqshbandī teachers played a prominent role in *Perti*, the most influential of them being Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli, who was one of *Perti*’s two most charismatic leaders. After Indonesia’s independence, both NU and *Perti* transformed themselves into political parties.

Traditionalist and generally sympathetic towards Sufism though these organisations were, they also made rigorous efforts to guard orthodoxy within their own ranks, and their conception of orthodoxy owed at least something to reformist critiques of traditional practices. During the first decades of their existence, the major debates about *tarekats* did not take place between reformists and traditionalists, or between their organisations, but within the traditionalist camp.²⁹ Both sides in the major debates of this period were Sufis or

²⁷ M. van Bruinessen, *NU: tradisi, relasi-relasi kuasa, pencarian wacana baru* (Yogyakarta 1994).

²⁸ The founders of *Perti* were traditionalist ulama who had been active in the West Sumatran branches of *Sarekat Islam* during the nineteentens but lost leading positions to reformist rivals. As an organisation *Perti* was preceded by an ephemeral Union of Sumatran ulama, in which the same persons were involved. The history of Minangkabau traditionalism is traced in H. Sanusi Latief, *Gerakan kaum tua di Minangkabau* (Unpublished Ph.D. Diss., IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta 1988).

²⁹ During the thirties and forties there was in fact a growing

at least favourable to *taṣawwuf*, opponents typically objected to specific elements in one another's teachings, while proclaiming support for Sufism as such. Competition for the same disciples appears to have been a major motive behind these conflicts.

This was for instance the case with a conflict which arose within NU when in the late nineteen-twenties the Tijāniyya *tarekat* rapidly expanded in the Cirebon area on Java's north coast, to some extent at the expense of established teachers affiliated with other orders.³⁰ The chief propagators were Kiai Anas of Buntet, a scion of an influential family of ulama in Cirebon, and ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṭayyib, a Medina-born, Azhar-educated Arab ʿālim, who had been a teacher and bookseller in various parts of western Java. Kiai Anas had returned in 1927 from study in the Ḥijāz, having received an *ijāza* to proselytize for the Tijāniyya from Shaykh Alfā Ḥāshim (Muḥammad al-Ḥāshimī) in Medina. ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṭayyib too held an *ijāza* from Alfā Ḥāshim, granted in 1916, besides an earlier one from Shaykh Ādam b. M. Shāʿib al-Barnāwī. In Indonesia, al-Ṭayyib authorised several *kiai* in the wider Cirebon region to spread the teachings of the Tijāniyya. As instruction material for new initiates, moreover, he published an abbreviated edition of Aḥmad b. Bābā al-Shinqīṭī's *Munyat al-murīd*, a simple work on the principles of the Tijāniyya.³¹

The Tijāniyya spread rapidly, perhaps (as suggested by Pijper) because of the relatively simple discipline it demanded from those joining it, perhaps also because of the extraordinary promise of certain salvation. Teachers of the Naqshbandiyya and the Qādiriyya, who lost disciples to this newly arrived order, singled out especially these two aspects in their polemical attacks on the Tijāniyya. Between 1928 and 1931 a heated debate went on, pro- and anti-Tijāni teachers

convergence between the traditionalist and reformist camps, as the former implicitly accepted certain ideas originally associated with the reformists, and the latter toned down their criticism of *taqlīd* and the *madhhab*. It was only after independence, when the two were represented by rival political parties, that the religious debate between them became exacerbated again.

³⁰ G.F. Pijper, 'De opkomst der Tidjaniyyah op Java', in id., *Fragmenta Islamica* (Leiden 1934) 97-121.

³¹ *Kitāb Munyat al-murīd li-ʿallāmat zamānih al-mashhūr bi-Ibn Bābā al-Shinqīṭī al-ʿAlawī al-musammā bi'l-Tijānī* (Tasikmalaya 1346/1928). Pijper, 'De opkomst der Tidjaniyyah' 100, suggests that among ordinary Indonesian followers of the order this was the most widely used Tijāni text, but he lists various others that were also known (ibid. 104).

insulting each other in sermons and pamphlets. Interestingly, some opponents accused the Tijāniyya of being Wahhābīs (a label applied rather indiscriminately to reformists of all shades in Indonesia);³² Tijānīs in defense pointed out that the Saʿūdī regime had forbidden Shaykh Alfā Hāshim to recite their *wird* in Medina.

It is perhaps significant that the one scholar who wrote a learned refutation of certain teachings of the Tijāniyya was not an Indonesian but a respected Meccan scholar then residing in Java, ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṣadaqa Daḥlān.³³ The Indonesian opponents of the order appeared to be more concerned with what they perceived to be unfair competition than with deviations from doctrinal purity. Daḥlān's tract, *Tanbīh al-ghāfil*,³⁴ largely restricts itself to a critique of ʿAlī al-Ṭayyib's edition of the *Munyat al-murīd* and of another basic Tijānī work, ʿUmar b. Saʿīd al-Fūtī's *Rimāḥ ḥizb al-rahīm*, and attempts to disprove the Tijāniyya's claims of superiority over all other orders. Analysing the Tijāniyya's most important prayers, the *waḥīfa* and the *haylala*, Daḥlān finds they only contain a few words that do not occur in the prayers of other orders and asks mockingly whether it is because of these few words (*salām Allāh* and the prayer *Jawharat al-kamāl*) that Tijānīs are guaranteed entry to Paradise. The claim that the Tijānīs will be treated with preference on the Day of Judgement is refuted with a barrage of quotations from the Koran and *ḥadīth*, and the order's claim of Aḥmad al-Tijānī's superior *walāya* is rejected because it would imply imperfections in the Prophet.

The way in which these debates between apologists and opponents of the Tijāniyya came to an end is also instructive. Protagonists on both sides were members of NU or had close relations with NU leaders, so that the conflict threatened to divide this organisation. Kiai Abbas of Buntet, the elder brother of the Tijānī teacher Kiai

³² This accusation was probably based on the Tijāniyya's forbidding its followers *ziyāra* to non-Tijānī shrines and the recitation of any but the prayers of the order itself, which meant a repudiation of traditional practices.

³³ ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṣadaqa Daḥlān was a close relative of the famous *shaykh al-ʿulamāʾ* and Shāfiʿī *muftī* of Mecca, Aḥmad b. Zaynī Daḥlān, which no doubt contributed to his prestige in Southeast Asia. Before coming to Java he had been the *muftī* of the Malay kingdom of Kedah; later he had been head of an Arab school in Batavia.

³⁴ *Tanbīh al-ghāfil wa-irshād al-mustafīd al-ʿāqil* (Tasikmalaya 1349/1931), summarised in Pijper, 'De opkomst der Tidjaniyyah' 111-6. An abridged version, titled *Wuḍūḥ al-dalāʾil*, was reprinted in the nineteeneighies.

Anas, was a leading member of *Nahdlatul Ulama*, and in 1931 this organisation held its sixth congress in Cirebon, in Kiai Abbas' *pesantren* (boarding school) at Buntet. One of the questions discussed by the assembled ulama concerned the orthodoxy of the Tijāniyya. Not wishing to antagonise the host, the NU board found a compromise formula which allowed followers and opponents to coexist peacefully. The prayers (*wird*, *ṣalawāt*, *istighfār*, etc.) of the order were declared orthodox, as well as all of its teachings which were clearly in agreement with the sharia. As for teachings which were seemingly in conflict with the sharia, if they allowed for metaphorical interpretation (*ta'wīl*), judgement was to be left to experts within the *ṭarīqa*; it was only where such interpretation was impossible that any teaching was declared sinful. This compromise formula, which the Tijānīs preferred to interpret as an endorsement, did not entirely silence the opponents,³⁵ but it did take the sting out of the debates.

Another debate, starting in the nineteen-forties, divided the Naqshbandī teachers of West Sumatra and also had sent reverberations throughout the Archipelago. The immediate cause of the debate was the emergence on the scene of a young and ambitious Naqshbandī teacher, Haji Jalaluddin of Bukittinggi. He was the first *tarekat* teacher of a new type, a product of Dutch education rather than the *surau* (*madrassa*); he made his living as a schoolteacher and became a highly productive writer. One of his first books had been a 'scientific' apology of Islam, finding in the textbook physics of his day confirmation of God's words in the Koran. By regularly associating with *Perti* ulama he had gradually assimilated some knowledge of Arabic and the Muslim sciences. During the nineteen-thirties he was close to *Perti*'s leading Naqshbandī shaykh, Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli, and he acquired a position of influence in *Perti*. In or around 1940 he published the first in a long series of, mostly apologetic and polemical, books and brochures on the Naqshbandiyya, which were to invite much criticism but which also brought him many disciples.³⁶

³⁵ Kiai Muhammad Ismail of Kracak near Cirebon, a shaykh of the Qādiriyya wa-Naqshbandiyya who had lost many disciples to the Tijāniyya, published a last fierce attack on the Tijāniyya in 1932, but it contained no new arguments (Pijper, 'De opkomst der Tidjaniyyah' 118-20).

³⁶ *Pertahanan ath-thariqat an-naqshabandiyyah* ('Defense of the Naqshbandī order') iv

Some of Jalaluddin's colleagues, including Shaykh Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli, were less than happy with his defense of the *tarekat* against reformist criticism, for in their view his writings contained a number of serious errors. Most of these errors had nothing to do with the central subject matter of his books, i.e. the Naqshbandiyya *ṭarīqa* (the ulama were incensed, for instance, at Jalaluddin's writing that the Prophet had received *ṣadaqa* in his lifetime). One senses in the ulama's attitude a certain irritation with this upstart who had not had a proper traditional education and had entered upon a field which they considered their exclusive domain. They had to admit that Jalaluddin wrote well, and that his books found an eager audience, which must only have added to the irritation. When Jalaluddin refused to withdraw his books or correct them, he was expelled from *Perti*.

In 1945, shortly after Indonesia's declaration of independence, *Perti* reconstituted itself as a political party, *Partai Islam Perti*. Haji Jalaluddin challenged his colleagues by establishing his own political organisation, the *Partai Politik Tarekat Islam* (PPTI), and even an armed militia force, the *Barisan Tentera Allah* ('Guards of God's Army') which after the first Dutch military action in 1947 was integrated into the national guerrilla front.³⁷ Maintaining the initiative in other fields as well, Haji Jalaluddin began publishing a new series of books which constituted a sort of correspondence course in the Naqshbandiyya. His *Rahasia mutiara* ('The secret of the pearl') is one of the clearest and most explicit books explaining the techniques and rituals of the Naqshbandiyya, with unique pictures showing the location of the *laṭā'if* and the trajectory of the *dhikr nafi wa-ithbāt* through the body.³⁸ His description (or prescription?) of the initiation (*bay'a*) ritual, however, contains some elements which appear to be new and which did not fail to rekindle the anger of his rivals.

vols. (Bukittinggi 1940).

³⁷ Djohan Effendi, 'PPTI: Eine konfliktreiche Tarekat-Organisation', in Werner Kraus (ed.), *Islamische mystische Bruderschaften im heutigen Indonesien* (Hamburg, Institut für Asienkunde, 1990) 91-2; Hamka, in the fourth volume of his autobiography *Kenang2-an hidup* (3rd ed., Jakarta 1975) 96, explains the establishment of the Barisan Tentera Allah as born from fear lest the reformist Muhammadiyah might become the dominating force in the region after independence and ban *tarekat* activities.

³⁸ The first volume of *Rahasia mutiara: ath-thariqat an-naqsyabandiyah* probably was published in the early nineteenfifties, its sixth and last volume in 1961. It has been regularly reprinted.

As practised by Haji Jalaluddin, and described in his book, *bay'at* is a real initiatory ritual in which the *murīd* symbolically dies, experiences an intermediate state of existence and is then reborn. The *murīd* begins by taking a purificatory bath (*ghusl li'l-tawba*) and performing prayers for forgiveness; then he is covered with a shroud and must imagine that he is dead and buried, and he is put to sleep in the position of the grave. While asleep he should have one of twenty possible dreams or visions (such as meeting one of the masters of the *silsila* and receiving instruction from him; or enjoying the *murshid's* intercession on the Day of Resurrection). If he has no dream, the procedure must be repeated the following nights until a dream arrives. Next morning, after *ṣubḥ* prayer, the *murīd* meets face to face with the *murshid* for instruction in the *dhikr*.³⁹

In 1954, *Perti* organised a *tarekat* conference, attended by some two hundred Naqshbandiyya-affiliated ulama, to discuss and condemn Haji Jalaluddin's books. The assembled ulama issued a fatwa declaring the books *ḥarām* for readers without sufficient religious knowledge, because they contained serious doctrinal errors and reprehensible innovation (*bid'at*).⁴⁰ Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli followed this up with a brochure, *Tablīgh al-amāna*, in which he pointed out thirty-three 'major errors' in Jalaluddin's books. These included a misinterpretation of the verse *wa-lā yadhkurūn Allāh illā qalīlan* (implying that neglecting *dhikr* amounts to unbelief), the assertion that devotional acts inspired by dreams can legitimately be performed, the explanation of *tawḥīd* as referring to the unity of God's essence and that of all prophets, and the *bid'at* of the initiation ritual.⁴¹ In criticising Haji Jalaluddin, Shaykh Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli came to adopt a position close to that of Ahmad Khatib, and it is not surprising that he was quoted extensively, along with the latter, in an anti-Naqshbandī book published in 1961.⁴²

It is hard to imagine that these 'errors' were in themselves sufficient to warrant the concerted assault on Haji Jalaluddin. One ex-

³⁹ *Rahasia mutiara* i, 5-16.

⁴⁰ This fatwa is reprinted in A. Mm. Arief (ed.), *Fatwa tentang: Tharikat Naqasyabandiyah* (4th printing, Medan 1978/1961).

⁴¹ *Tablīgh al-amāna fī izālat al-munkarāt wa'l-shubuhāt* (in Malay) (Bukittinggi 1954) 23, 13-4, 22 and 18-20, respectively.

⁴² Arief, *Fatwa*. This book, though primarily targeting Jalaluddin, whose star was rising rapidly at the time, is directed against the Naqshbandiyya as such.

tra-religious factor which should be taken into account is the fact that Indonesia's first democratic elections (to be held in 1955) were approaching and that *Perti* and PPTI were courting the same segments of the electorate. Jalaluddin was working hard to turn PPTI into a nation-wide formation. PPTI made a reasonable showing in North and Central Sumatra, in some districts getting as much as ten per cent of the vote, and Jalaluddin was voted into parliament. Over the years that followed he answered his opponents with a new barrage of polemical tracts and to a considerable extent outflanked them through diligent use of his political contacts.

Haji Jalaluddin was a staunch supporter and flatterer of Sukarno, and he was rewarded for his loyalty. When Sukarno dissolved the parliament and replaced it by a handpicked assembly and people's congress, Haji Jalaluddin was made a member of both, no longer representing PPTI but the ulama as a 'functional group'. He became one of Sukarno's Muslim apologists, probably as much out of conviction as for reasons of expedience. His dubbing Sukarno's politics '*tarekat* Sukarnowiyah' and proclaiming them to be in agreement with other orthodox *tarekats* no doubt made it easier for him to go on organising his own following.⁴³

PPTI ceased to exist as a political party in 1961 and became a non-political association of *tarekat* shaykhs and followers.⁴⁴ In the nineteen-sixties it experienced rapid expansion throughout Indonesia, partly by recruiting people affiliated with all other orthodox (*mu'tabar*) orders, partly by Haji Jalaluddin's appointing numerous *khalifas* and liberally bestowing the title of doctor on those who subscribed to his never-ending series of brochures. In some distant places he appointed individuals as his *khalifa* whom he had never met in person. Others joined his organisation as a profession of

⁴³ The term '*tarekat* Sukarnowiyah' occurs in the tract *Tiga serangkai* ('Three inseparable friends'), which was published in 1964 as an answer to certain critics. One year earlier, in a tract named *Pembelaan Tharikat Islam Naksjabandijah*, vol. iv, Jalaluddin had gone so far as to ask whether Sukarno was the Mahdi. He stopped short of giving an affirmative answer but asserted that all the characteristic signs were present.

⁴⁴ It had of course to change its name but retained the same initials, which henceforth stood for *Persatuan Pengamal Tarekat Islam*, 'Union of Devotees of Islamic Tarekat'. In the nineteen-seventies several more changes of name followed, *Pengamal* being replaced by *Penganut* ('Followers') and, after a split in the organisation, variously by *Pembela* ('Defenders'), *Pembina* ('Promoters') and *Pejuang* ('Partisans').

loyalty towards the established order, out of fear of being considered political opponents, or for other mundane, opportunistic reasons.⁴⁵

Haji Jalaluddin's opponents gradually fell silent, not because they were convinced by the cogency of his published arguments but because he became too powerful for them to speak out against him with impunity. The fall of Sukarno scarcely affected him, for his PPTI had by then affiliated itself with the 'functional group' umbrella organisation *Golkar*, which under Suharto became the *de facto* governing party. Thus the PPTI was, and remains, the sole representative and mouth-piece of *tarekats* at the government level. Like many leaders of his ilk, Haji Jalaluddin did not tolerate strong personalities around him and never groomed a successor for fear he might lose power himself. After his death in 1976, PPTI soon declined in importance and moreover split into rival factions. Since then it has not taken part in any debates, not even minor ones, concerning Sufism and *tarekats*.⁴⁶

During most of this century reformist Muslims did not so much contest Sufism and specific Sufi orders as such, but rather certain practices and beliefs. Much of the debate (somewhat one-sided in this respect) has been concerned with the metaphysics of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, which in the view of its opponents encouraged people to disregard the sharia. In fact, only few contemporary Indonesian *tarekat* followers adhere to the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* in any form. The real target of these polemics was Indonesia's majority of nominal ('*abangan*') Muslims. Until its physical destruction and the mass murder of its members in 1965-66, the Communist Party of Indonesia had found its strongest support among *abangan* workers and villagers. Reformist Muslims, opposed to Communism as well as laxity in religious observance, tended to identify these two phenomena, as well as to lump *tarekat* and *abangan* mystical movements together.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ I have not been able to find solid confirmation of the claims of some of my informants that Haji Jalaluddin's *khalifas* and PPTI board members were given special cards with photographs of Haji Jalaluddin and Sukarno, which allowed them free travel on public transport.

⁴⁶ The vicissitudes of PPTI in Sukarno's and Suharto's Indonesia are narrated in Effendi, 'PPTI'.

⁴⁷ One of the few reformist critics who had actually studied *tarekat* literature was the

Among Java's nominal Muslims there exists a wide range of mystical movements (commonly called *aliran kebatinan* 'esoteric movements'). Since the nineteen-thirties these have had more or less formal structures somewhat resembling the *tarekats* (but without any form of *silsila* connecting them with the Prophet of Islam). Some of them are explicitly non-Islamic, others consider themselves to be Muslim, but none of them prescribes that their followers must live in conformity with the sharia. The *aliran kebatinan* have often aroused the missionary zeal of reformist Muslims who have felt it their moral duty to save their countrymen from damnation in the hereafter and the seductions of 'Communism' in this world.⁴⁸

In order to disassociate themselves from the syncretistic *kebatinan* sects (and, after 1965, to evade the dangerous suspicion of harbouring Communist sympathies), Javanese teachers of the Qādiriyya, Naqshbandiyya, Shādhiliyya and other main-stream *tarekats* organised themselves in the NU-affiliated *Jam'iyat ahl al-ṭarīqa al-mu'tabara*. This association was formally established in 1957 but only became influential in the nineteen-seventies. Its very name represented an apology, a disclaimer of belonging to what the reformists objected to: only those *tarekats* which respected the sharia and had a convincing *silsila* were considered as *mu'tabar*, i.e. respectable or orthodox.⁴⁹

A major conflict which has caused division within the *Jam'iyat* during the past decades once again concerns the Tijāniyya. The 'respectability' of this order was called into question during the nineteen-eighties because of the claim that its founder, Aḥmad al-Tijānī,

Minangkabau journalist Joesoef Sou'yb in *Wihdatul wujud dalam berbagai aliran mistik* (Medan 1976) and *Aliran kebatinan mistik dan perkembangannya* (Medan 1988). He criticised not only Javanese mystical sects (*aliran kebatinan*) for their monist views but also the Naqshbandiyya *tarekat*, the latter on the grounds that Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Khānī's well-known manual *al-Bahja al-saniyya* espouses *waḥdat al-wujūd*. Few Indonesian Naqshbandis, however, embrace *waḥdat al-wujūd*, and even fewer subscribe to the vulgar interpretation Sou'yb attributed to them.

⁴⁸ The combination of Muslim reformist agitation and New Order anti-Communism has forced these mystical movements gradually to purge all antinomian elements from their teachings and approximate the orthodoxies of the accepted formal religions. Regarding this domestication of the *kebatinan* movements, see Paul Stange, 'Legitimate' mysticism in Indonesia', *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Studies* xx, no. 2 (1986) 76-117.

⁴⁹ The history of the *Jam'iyat ahl al-ṭarīqa al-mu'tabara* is sketched in my book on the Naqshbandiyya: Martin van Bruinessen, *Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah di Indonesia* (2nd revised edition, (Bandung 1994).

received his initiation directly from the Prophet (whom he is believed to have met while fully awake), and because of certain extravagant claims about the merits of its distinctive devotions, but especially because it took disciples away from other *tarekat* teachers. Opponents availed themselves of the same theological arguments that had been current in the debates of the nineteen-thirties, and Daḥlān's book was reprinted and widely distributed in the original as well as in Indonesian and Madurese translations. Interestingly, the fiercest opponents of the Tijāniyya were not reformists but mystical teachers who were more strongly inclined towards syncretism and towards recourse to Islamic magic than the aggressively proselytizing Tijāniyya teachers.⁵⁰

Most of the conflicts involving Sufi orders in the twentieth century were to a large extent conflicts between different types of leaders who based their power on divergent claims to authority and at the same time attempted to discredit the legitimacy of their rivals. Some of the most severe conflicts were, in fact, not between Sufis and anti-*taṣawwuf* reformists but between rival *tarekat* shaykhs. The reformists' attitude towards Sufism has not been uniformly negative. Numerous followers of Indonesia's largest reformist organisation, *Muhammadiyah*, subscribe to what the popular *Muhammadiyah* leader, Hamka, termed 'modern *taṣawwuf*', i.e. a Sufi attitude without the trappings of an organised *tarekat*. Moreover, some of the organised *tarekats* are actually finding a new following in circles which had previously been considered the natural constituency of reformism, i.e. among the socially and geographically mobile, educated segments of the population, students and young professionals. Polemical writings from the first half of this century for or against the *tarekats* are still regularly reprinted, but such writings appear to have little real impact on the growth or decline of present-day *tarekats*.

⁵⁰ This conflict is discussed at greater length in M. van Bruinessen, 'Tarekat and *tarekat* teachers in Madurese society', in Kees van Dijk, Huub de Jonge and Elly Touwen-Bouwsma (eds.), *Across Madura Strait: the dynamics of an insular society* (Leiden 1995) 91-117.

SUFIS UND IHRE WIDERSACHER IN KELANTAN/MALAYSIA
DIE POLEMIK GEGEN DIE AHMADIYYA ZU BEGINN
DES 20. JAHRHUNDERTS

WERNER KRAUS

Der Islam, der im 14., 15. und 16. Jahrhundert die malaiischen Inseln erreichte und durchdrang, war geprägt von der mystischen Vorstellung der Immanenz Gottes. Darin unterschied er sich wahrscheinlich wenig vom zeitgenössischen Islam in anderen Regionen. Islamische Mystik und mystische Bruderschaften übten, vom Magreb bis nach Zentralasien und Malaya, einen starken Einfluss auf die religiöse Erfahrung und den spekulativen Intellekt muslimischer Gesellschaften aus. Opposition gegen die malaio-islamische Mystik jener Zeit wäre einer Opposition gegen den Islam schlechthin gleichgekommen. Die dem Islam innewohnende Spannung zwischen Transzendenz und Immanenz, zwischen Gesetzlichkeit und Mystik, wurde in Südostasien anfänglich und über lange Zeit, nur von wenigen Spezialisten registriert. Die Mehrzahl der malaiischen Muslime war sich dieser Spannung nicht bewusst. Für sie war der Islam zunächst eine neue, zusätzliche Methode, um die Mächte der belebten und unbelebten Welt halbwegs unter Kontrolle zu halten. Die Gesetzlichkeit war da wenig hilfreich. Mystisch-magische Techniken dagegen um so mehr.

Es ist deshalb nicht erstaunlich, dass der Widerstand gegen den mystischen Islam und seinem organisatorischen Ausdruck, den Bruderschaften (*tarekat*),¹ in Südostasien erst spät, im 19. Jahrhundert, in Erscheinung trat und dann hauptsächlich von Arabern getragen wurde. Ulama, wie die Hadhrami Salim ibn Samir und Sayid Uth-

¹ *Tarīqa* (pl. *ṭuruq*) bezeichnet im arabischen eine Bruderschaft und/oder deren Ideologie (Pfad). Im malaiischen Kulturraum wurde dieses Begriffsfeld zu *tarekat*, *thariqat*, *thoriqoh* und ähnlich geschriebenen Wörtern abgewandelt. Dabei wird kein Unterschied zwischen Singular und Plural gemacht. Die Mehrzahl wird einfach durch Verdoppelung von *tarekat* gebildet. Ich werde mich im Folgenden an die malaiischen Termini halten und auch theologische Begriffe, sofern sie eine malaiische Entsprechung haben, in der malaiischen Schreibweise wiedergeben. Das bedeutet auch, dass diakritische Zeichen nicht berücksichtigt werden.

man bin Abdullah bin Akil bin Yahya Alawi, liessen sich in ihrer Kritik an den Bruderschaften allerdings nicht allein von dogmatischen Überlegungen leiten. Sie hofften dadurch ihr religiöses Charisma zu stärken und gleichzeitig ihren unsicheren Rechtsstatus in der holländischen Kolonie günstig zu beeinflussen. Im ausgehenden 19. Jahrhundert war die Kolonialverwaltung von einer geradezu hysterischen Angst vor "geheimsinnigen" Bruderschaften befallen und es war der Stellung der Araber dienlich, der europäischen Angst theologisch zur Seite zu springen. Wesentliche einheimische Kritiker der islamischen Mystik traten in Südostasien allerdings erst mit dem Eindringen der Salafiyya auf. Die Träger der Salafiyya waren in der Regel selbst Söhne von *Tarekat* Scheichen und oft kann man sich des Eindrucks nicht erwehren, dass ihre scharfen Angriffe Ausdruck eines Vater-Sohn Konflikts waren. Bruderschaften wurden nun, auf Grund von häufig übertriebenen und verleumderischen Darstellungen, mit den Ausdrücken *bid'ah* und *syirk* bedacht, ihre religiösen Praktiken als Orte des Unglaubens beschimpft.² Der in diesem Aufsatz dargestellte Fall aus Kelantan gibt einen guten Einblick in die Heftigkeit der Auseinandersetzung und zeigt die Bereitschaft der Salafiyya sich, im Eifer der Heilsuche, bedenkenlos unlauterer Methoden zu bedienen.

Kelantan ist der nordöstlichste Staat Festland-Malaysias und in vieler Hinsicht das "malaiischste" Gebiet der Republik. Während sich in fast allen Teilstaaten Malaysias Chinesen und Malaier zahlenmässig ausgeglichen gegenüberstehen, sind die demographischen Verhältnisse in Kelantan eindeutig: rund 94% seiner Einwohner sind muslimische Malaier. Kelantan gilt deshalb als Schwerpunkt der malaiischen Kultur Malaysias. Daneben beansprucht Kelantan das Recht, als Zentrum der islamischen Tradition des Landes betrachtet zu werden und schmückt sich mit dem Ehrentitel "Serambi Mekka", der Balkon Mekkas.

Kelantan blickt auf eine etwa tausendjährige Geschichte zurück. Das Delta und das Becken des Kelantanflusses waren Teil des engmaschigen Netzes von Häfen und Stapelplätzen, die der internationale Fernhandel zwischen dem östlichen Mittelmeer, Indien und China

² Ein ständig wiederkehrendes Argument sind sexuelle Verfehlungen der *Tarekat* Mitglieder während des *dzikir*.

in Südostasien benötigte. Kelantan speiste, neben Reis, auch Gold, Zinn, Pfeffer und Dschungelprodukte in das System des internationalen Austausches von Luxusprodukten ein. Die dabei entstandenen kleinräumigen Herrschaftsstrukturen existierten manchmal in Unabhängigkeit, öfter jedoch in Abhängigkeit von den beiden Nachbarstaaten, Patani im Norden und Trengganu im Süden. Es gab aber auch Zeiten, in denen Kelantan einen dieser Staaten unter seine eigene Souveränität zwingen konnte. Diese regionalen Auseinandersetzungen waren allerdings in grössere politische Dimensionen eingebunden. Lange Zeit waren Kelantan und seine Nachbarn südliche Tributärstaaten Siams, eine Bürde, die in der Regel ohne grössere Belastung getragen wurde. Erst im 19. Jahrhundert, als sich Siam und das britische Kolonialreich in der Gegend von Kelantan rieben, erhöhte sich der Druck aus Bangkok. Die siamnesische Monarchie wollte ihre südlichen Grenzen und ihre Beziehungen zu den Briten und Franzosen (die sich als Kolonialmächte in der Nachbarschaft niedergelassen hatten) klar definieren. Dabei gelang es Siam jedoch nicht, Kelantan, Kedah, Perlis und Trengganu innerhalb seiner Grenzen zu halten. Der anglo-siamnesische Vertrag von 1909 brachte diese Staaten, gegen ihren Willen, unter die Oberhoheit Englands. Kelantan wurde Teil des britischen Kolonialreichs und trat 1957 in die unabhängige Republik Malaysia ein.

In den letzten dreissig Jahren spielte Kelantan oft den Aussenseiter der malaysischen Politik. Es war und ist, aus strukturellen Gründen, weniger am Entwicklungsprozess Malaysias beteiligt als andere Staaten. Noch heute betragen die mittleren monatlichen Haushalteinkünfte in Kelantan nur 58% der nationalen Einkünfte.³ Die spezifische Zusammensetzung seiner Bevölkerung macht Kelantan zur Hochburg der islamischen Partei PAS, die sich dem Führungsanspruch der malaiischen Mehrheitspartei UMNO widersetzt. Dadurch wurde der Konflikt zwischen PAS und UMNO oft zugleich ein Konflikt zwischen Staatsregierung und Landesregierung, zwischen Kuala Lumpur und Kota Bharu.⁴ So stellt sich auch

³ Dieter Nohlen und Franz Nuscheler (ed.), *Handbuch der Dritten Welt* (Bonn 1994) VII, 470.

⁴ Kota Bharu an der Mündung des Kelantanflusses ist die Hauptstadt des malaysischen Bundesstaates Kelantan.

der gegenwärtige Stand der politischen Realität dar. Kelantan wird heute von der oppositionellen PAS regiert und versucht, seine islamische Identität durch die Einführung der Scharia zu untermauern.

Der Prozess der Islamisierung Kelantans kann historisch nicht klar rekonstruiert werden. Einheimische Autoren bemühen sich, den Zeitpunkt der Islamisierung möglichst weit in die Vergangenheit zurückzuschieben. Aber es wird schwer nachzuweisen sein, dass Kelantan vor dem 15. Jahrhundert eine tiefergreifende Islamisierung erfahren hat. Verstreute Nachrichten deuten daraufhin, dass die neue Religion Kelantan nicht aus Malakka, sondern aus dem im Norden angrenzenden Patani erreicht hat.

Der Islam entfaltete in Südostasien seine Dynamik zur Zeit der grossen Ausweitung des internationalen Seehandels zwischen der arabischen Welt, Indien und China im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert. Die Bevölkerung der sich im Archipel neu etablierenden Handelszentren stammte, in ihrer Mehrzahl, aus den animistischen Hinterländern der Inseln. Animismus ist aber kein leicht transportables religiöses Gut. Die Objekte seiner Verehrung — örtliche Geister und Naturgenien, die Seelen der Verstorbenen — besitzen eine starke lokale Bindung. Die Schutzwirkung dieser Geister und Ahnen hat deshalb eine lokal eingeeengte Wirksamkeit. Die Leute, die in die Hafenstädte gingen, entbanden sich dieses Schutzes. Sie waren dort dem Wirken der örtlichen Geister auf Gedeih und Verderb ausgeliefert. Entweder sie reisten so häufig wie möglich zurück zu den Gräbern ihrer Ahnen und Plätzen ihrer schützenden Geister, um ihre körperliche und spirituelle Immunität aufzufrischen, oder sie suchten sich ein neues, universelles System, ein System, das an keine bestimmte spirituelle Geographie gebunden war. Der Islam, und besonders der mystische Islam, war ein solches System. Er versprach, neben universal gültigen magischen Schutz, noch zusätzliche Kontrolle über die feinstoffliche Welt.

Malaiische Kosmologien sind sehr eng mit dem Begriff *semangat* (magisch definierte Kraft) verbunden. *Semangat* ist eine Kraft, die sich in allen Aspekten der natürlichen Welt manifestiert und die im zentralen Mysterium des Lebens, dem Kreislauf von Geburt, Leben und Tod, ihren tiefsten Ausdruck findet. Diese Kraft kann durch eine bestimmte Lebensführung angehäuft und maximiert werden und

wird schliesslich in der Welt als "Charisma"⁵ sichtbar. Jede religiöse oder politische Führungspersönlichkeit in Java und anderen Teilen des Archipels verfügt, per Definition, über eine Konzentration von *semangat*. Denn Macht, in der einen oder anderen Form, ist nichts anderes als die zwangsläufige Folge der Verdichtung von *semangat*.⁶

Magische Kraft potenziert sich aber nicht nur in der charismatischen Persönlichkeit, sondern kann sich ebenso in bestimmten Gesteinsformationen, aussergewöhnlich gewachsenen Pflanzen, Tieren und Menschen, sowie in heiligen Gräbern ansammeln. Unter dem Einfluss des Islams kam es zu einer Bedeutungsverschiebung des Konzeptes von *semangat*. Diese ursprünglich dem neutralen kosmischen Wirken zuge dachte Kraft, wurde nun mehr und mehr dem Willen und Wirken Gottes zugeordnet. Sie näherte sich dem islamischen Begriff *baraka*. *Baraka* wird so zur Eigenschaft, über die manche Menschen im höheren Mass verfügen als andere. Die Entscheidung darüber, wer dieses seltene und wertvolle Gut besitzt, wird allein durch gesellschaftlichen Konsensus getroffen.

Innerhalb des islamischen Kontinuums vom Gesetz zur Mystik, von der Scharia zum *taṣawwuf*, ist allein die Mystik zur Produktion von Charisma und *baraka* in der Lage. Wenn man davon ausgeht, dass die Potenzierung von *semangat* bzw. *baraka* der wesentliche Inhalt des spirituellen Strebens früherer religiöser Systeme im Archipel war, kann man verstehen, dass der Islam nur in seiner mystischen Form in Südostasien Eingang finden konnte. Ein religiöses System, das keine *baraka* in die Gesellschaft bringen und dort verbreiten konnte, hatte nie eine Chance, das Geistesleben Südasiens dauerhaft zu beeinflussen.

Meine These lautet deshalb, dass der Islam im malaiischen Archipel nicht deshalb rezipiert wurde, weil er neue Legitimationsformen für die Herrscher (theoretisch stellt der mystisch geprägte Islam jede Form von Herrschaft in Frage) mit sich brachte, noch weil er ein neues Rechtssystem anbot (islamisches Recht war bis ins 19. Jahrhundert hinein von geringer Bedeutung im malaiischen Archipel). Er

⁵ Charisma gebrauche ich hier nicht im strikten Weberschen Sinn, sondern umgangssprachlich. Also in der Bedeutung von "Führungsqualität", "freiwillige Unterordnung herbeiführende Macht".

⁶ Siehe dazu den berühmten Aufsatz von Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, 'The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture', in Clair Holt et. al. (ed.), *Cultur and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca 1972).

war erfolgreich, weil er zu einer neuen Quelle für die Konzentration von *semangat* und damit für Macht wurde.

Eine andere wichtige Neuerung, die der mystische Islam in die Geisteskultur des malaiischen Archipels brachte, war die Gewissheit, dass Charisma und *baraka* nicht allein durch die asketische Ansammlung von kosmischer Kraft (*semangat*) erworben werden können, sondern dass Wissen, religiöses Wissen, ein wesentlicher Teil dieses Prozesses sei. Ein islamisches Sprichwort lautet: "Nie schuf Gott einen unwissenden Heiligen". Ein theologischer Ignorant kann kein Heiliger werden. Neben den asketischen, ekstatischen und gnostischen Qualitäten der Heilsuche tritt eine neue, die intellektuelle, hinzu. Da in der islamischen Kultur Heilige zugleich Wissende sind und Wissen durch das Studium von Texten erworben wird, sind die intellektuellen Fähigkeiten eines Heiligen und sein geschliffener Umgang mit geschriebenen Texten Voraussetzung für seinen Erfolg. In allen Hagiographien wird das theologische Wissen (die Kenntnis der Offenbarungsliteratur und der dazugehörigen Kommentare) des Heiligen als von höchster Qualität (bezogen auf die lokale Norm) geschildert. Das unterscheidet den islamischen Mystiker vom malaiischen Magier (*dukun*) und stellt eine klare Trennung zwischen diesen beiden Sphären her.⁷

Der mystisch geprägte Islam Südostasiens rezipierte und transportierte deshalb auch ein theologisches Grundwissen von Gesetz und Dogmatik — ob alle Mystiker die Bedeutung des Gesetzes für die religiöse Praxis anerkannten, ist eine andere Frage — so dass der ethische, schariatreue Sufismus, zumindest in seiner Anlage, schon sehr früh im Archipel präsent war. Allerdings fehlten oft die kulturellen und sozialen Voraussetzungen zu seiner Entwicklung.

Ich betrachte deshalb die Sufi Bruderschaften in Südostasien nicht als häretische Gegenspieler der am dogmatischen Kanon orientierten ulama. Die idealtypische Unterscheidung von ulama und Sufis ist eine Unterscheidung von Rollen, nicht von Männern. Der *‘ālim*, Wächter und Verteidiger des islamischen Rechts, und der Sufi, spiritueller Meister, der den Gläubigen die gnostische Gotteserfahrung vermittelte, war sehr oft in einer Person vereint. Dies gilt ganz be-

⁷ Richard Winstedts Buch, *The Malay Magician being a Shaman, Shaiva and Sufi* (London 1951) beschwört im Titel und im Text eine Kontinuität zwischen animistischen und islamischen Traditionen, die man so nicht aufrechterhalten kann.

sonders für den malaiischen Islam. Mystiker wie Abdur Ra'uf al-Singkeli, der die Shattāriyya Bruderschaft nach Südostasien brachte, Scheich Yusuf Makassari, der die Khalwatiyya verbreitete und Scheich Isma'īl Simabur, der frühe Vertreter der Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya, waren nicht nur Sufis sondern zugleich auch gelehrte Ulama und Reformer des malaiischen Islams. Jede neu nach Südostasien gebrachte Bruderschaft war Teil eines islamischen Reformschubes.

Neuere islamwissenschaftliche Autoren betrachten die islamische Mystik nicht mehr als exotische Seitenlinie der islamischen Theologie, sondern sehen sie als ergänzenden Gegenpol zum Gesetz. Im malaiischen Archipel war die islamische Mystik über Jahrhunderte aber mehr als nur ein ergänzender Gegenpol zum Gesetz. Sie war der Mittelpunkt sowohl der Volks- als auch der Elitenfrömmigkeit. Es war vielmehr das Gesetz, das islamische Recht, das über Jahrhunderte in Südostasien von marginaler Bedeutung war. Die Scharia spielte für die mehrheitlich stammesgesellschaftlich organisierten Muslime Südasiens nur eine geringe Rolle.⁸ Die Rechtssysteme der einzelnen Ethnien, der *Adat*, blieben für die gesellschaftliche Organisation bis ins 19. Jahrhundert von entscheidender Bedeutung. Es waren erst die nun in grosser Zahl nach Südostasien eindringenden Hadhramis und die reformierten Bruderschaften des 19. Jahrhunderts, die die einheimischen Sitten und Bräuche kritisierten und als unislamisch darstellten. So wuchs die latente Spannung zwischen den Reinheits- und Ordnungskriterien der Stammesgesellschaften Südasiens und der, im urbanen Kontext gewachsenen, islamischen Kultur zu einem Konflikt heran, der sowohl von der holländischen und englischen kolonialen Vorwärtsbewegung in Indonesien und Malaya als auch von einer starken islamischen Reformbewegung unterstützt und angeheizt wurde. Während die europäischen Mächte den kulturellen status quo der unterworfenen Stammesgesellschaften erhalten wollten, suchten die islamischen Kräfte diesen zu überwinden. *Adat* und Islam standen sich jetzt feindlich gegenüber.

Der Konflikt zwischen *Adat* und Islam ist wahrscheinlich ein typi-

⁸ Bis ins 19. Jahrhundert entstanden in Südostasien nur zwei malaiisch-sprachige Kompendien des islamischen Rechts. Das von Nuruddin ar-Rainiri im 17. Jahrhundert verfasste *Siratu'l-Mustaqim* und das vom Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari im 18. Jahrhundert geschriebene *Sabilu'l-Muhtadin*. Beide Kompendien werden noch heute verwendet.

scher Konflikt in Kulturen, die erst nach der Festschreibung des islamischen Kanons in die Ummat Islam eingetreten sind. Die gesellschaftlichen Regeln und Gebräuche der arabischen Kultur fanden, als integrale Bestandteile, ihren Weg in die Suren des Korans. Sitten und Gebräuche jener Kulturen, die während der ersten, raschen Expansion des Islams die neue Religion annahmen, hatten eine grosse Chance, über das Instrument des *Hadīth* religiös legitimiert zu werden. Kulturen dagegen, die erst im 13. Jahrhundert und später, als der islamische Kanon längst abgeschlossen und rechtsgültig interpretiert war, unter das Dach des *dār al-islām* gelangten, hatten nicht mehr die Möglichkeit, ihre kulturellen Eigenheiten, ihren *Adat*, religiös sanktionieren zu lassen. Diese standen ausserhalb der Sunna und hatten langfristig keine Chance, sich gegen die Offenbarungsliteratur zu behaupten. Kurzfristig dagegen hatten sie diese Chance sehr wohl und sie nutzten diese auch. Überall und immer gelang es den einheimischen Weltsichten, der islamischen Orthodoxie Zugeständnisse abzurufen, ja sie bis zur Unkenntlichkeit zu verformen. Aber die innerislamische Dynamik von Reform und Erneuerung blieb mit zäher Unbeirrbarkeit am Werk. Sie trotzte den einheimischen *Adat* eine Festung nach der anderen ab. Dieser Prozess, der die arabo-iranischen Vorstellungen vom Wesen Gottes und von der Organisation der idealen Gesellschaft in allen Teilen der islamischen Welt durchsetzte, ist immer noch am Werk und verringert die Differenzen zwischen *Adat* und Islam ständig. Es handelt sich dabei um einen Anpassungsprozess, der in der Regel gesamtgesellschaftlich getragen wird und deshalb meist konfliktfrei verläuft.⁹

Sufismus und islamische Bruderschaften sind zwei Phänomene, die gewöhnlich in die gleiche Kategorie gesteckt werden und die dennoch nicht ursächlich miteinander verbunden sind. Wie oben ausgeführt, wurde der Islam auf der malaiische Halbinsel in seiner mystischen Variante rezipiert. Dies bedeutet jedoch nicht, dass er von Bruderschaften gebracht und getragen wurde. Im Gegenteil, das Bruderschaftswesen spielte lange Zeit in Malaya eine untergeordnete

⁹ Konflikte entstanden hauptsächlich dann, wenn Kräfte von ausserhalb der Gesellschaft (etwa die Kolonialmächte) in diesen Prozess des Wandels eingriffen bzw. ihn aufhalten wollten. Selbstverständlich entstehen auch dann Konflikte wenn *adat*-Autoritäten durch den gesellschaftlichen und religiösen Wandel Macht verlieren.

Rolle. Selbst die grosse Expansion der neuerstarkten Bruderschaften im 19. Jahrhundert, die in der malaiischen Inselwelt von überragender Bedeutung war, hinterliess nur flache Spuren auf dem malaiischen Festland.

Die malaiischen Sultanate der Halbinsel waren bevölkerungsarme Kleinstaaten, die in der Regel das Einzugsgebiet eines Flusssystems nicht überschritten. Sie hatten weder die Ressourcen noch den Willen, sich eine Reihe von gebildeten religiösen Spezialisten zu halten. Islam war zwar die Religion der überwiegenden Mehrheit der Malaien, aber wirkte hauptsächlich in der symbolischen Sphäre der Gesellschaft. Die Alltagsethik war im wesentlichen vom überbrachten *Adat* bestimmt. Nur sehr wenige Malaien liessen sich vor dem 19. Jahrhundert auf das Abenteuer der Hadsch ein und noch weniger studierten für längere Zeit im Haramayn. Ausnahmen, allerdings sehr bedeutende, kennen wir allein aus Patani, Trengganu und Kelantan. Vor allem in Patani wuchs seit der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts eine Anzahl islamischer Gelehrter heran, deren Einfluss weit über die Grenzen ihrer engeren Heimat wirksam wurde.

Ein Grund für die geringe Zahl von Pilgern aus Malaya war die relativ späte koloniale "Erschliessung" des Landes. Der Hadsch in Niederländisch-Indien erlebte ja nicht zuletzt durch die mit der Kolonialherrschaft eindringende Geldwirtschaft einen grossen Aufschwung. Während aber die Geldwirtschaft von den Holländern im Archipel schon seit 1830 eingeführt wurde, kam dieser Prozess in Malaya erst fünfzig Jahre später so richtig in Gang.

Die einzige *Tarekat*, der in den malaiischen Gebieten der Halbinsel verbreitet war, war die Shattāriyya. Die Shattāriyya wurde wahrscheinlich von Abdul Malik bin Abdullah (?1650-1736), einem Schüler von Scheich Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī¹⁰ (über dem die Verbreitung der Shattāriyya nach Südostasien im 17. Jahrhundert in der Regel lief) nach Pulau Manis/Trengganu gebracht.¹¹ Sicher ist, dass sein Sohn Abdullah b. Abdul Malik seine Shattāriyya *ijāza* von Abdul-

¹⁰ Abdul Malik bin Abdullah schreibt in seiner *Risālat naql*, dass er bei Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī studiert habe. Siehe: Shafie Abu Bakar, *Institusi Shaykh 'Abdu l- Malik Bin 'Abdu l-lah (Satu Corak Pengajian Di Trengganu) Dan Kitab-Kirab Padanya* (Thesis untuk Sarjana Oersuratan, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi 1976/77) 86. Daneben vom gleichen Autor: 'Risalah Naql Syekh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah dengan Anotasi', *Pesaka* iii (1985) 22.

¹¹ Shafie bin Abu Bakar, 'Syekh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah dan Karangan-Karangannya', *Pesaka* II (1984).

muhyi in Pamijahan/Westjava, dem Begründer der Shattāriyya Tradition in Java, erhielt.¹²

Allerdings glaube ich, dass es sich bei diesen frühen Shattāriyya Gruppen nicht um Bruderschaften im heutigen Sinn gehandelt hat. Sie waren keine "corporate groups", keine um die Autorität eines Scheichs strukturierten Gruppen mit einer fest angebundenen Mitgliedschaft. Die Shattāris muss man eher als Anhänger eines Kultus, einer Tradition spiritueller (und magischer) Techniken, einer *ngelmu* betrachten. *Ngelmu* ist vom arabischen Wort *‘ilm* (Erkenntnis) abgeleitet, aber im malayo-islamischen Bereich war damit eine esoterische Erkenntnis gemeint. *Ngelmu* oder *ilmu* ist eine Lebenslehre, die ein spirituell erfülltes Leben, aber auch Macht und Reichtum verspricht. *Ngelmu* gab und gibt es viele in Südostasien. Religionshistorisch oszillieren sie auf dem Kontinuum zwischen Magie und Mystik. Im Zentrum der *ilmu* der Shattāris stand die Lehre von den sieben Seinsgraden, den *martabat tujuh*. Sie waren der indische Versuch einer Neuinterpretation der Ibn al-°Arabischen Mystik. Die "Urfassung" dieser Doktrin findet sich in Muḥammad b. Faḍl Allah al-Burhānpūrīs Werk *at-Tuḥfa al-mursala ilā’l-nabī*, das 1590 geschrieben wurde. Die Kernaussage der *martabat tujuh* ist, dass Gott alles "Sein" ist und dass sich dieses Sein durch, in verschiedene Grade eingeteilte, Emanationen in der Welt manifestiert, ohne sich dabei zu verändern. Dabei ist der vollkommene Mensch, *al-insān al-kāmil*, das Schlussstück der Manifestationen. Gelingt es nun dem Mystiker, den Weg der Emanationen in umgekehrter Richtung zu gehen, dann wird er Eingang in das All-Eine, in das unterschiedslose "Eins"-Sein finden.¹³

Die Theorie der sieben Seinsgrade, die in anderen Regionen der islamischen Welt kaum Beachtung fand, entwickelten in den malaiischen Insel eine eigenartige Dynamik. Die *martabat tujuh* glitten von der Ebene der theologischen Spekulation in alle möglichen Facetten der malaiischen Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte. So dienten sie als Modell für die Symbolik der Moscheenarchitektur in Kelantan, waren Grundlage des gesellschaftlichen Klassifikationsschemas auf

¹² R.O. Winstedt, 'Notes on Malay Subjects', *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society* xx, 1 (1947) 141-42.

¹³ Werner Kraus, *Zwischen Reform und Rebellion. Über die Entwicklung des Islams in Minangkabau (Westsumatra) zwischen den beiden Reformbewegungen der Padri (1837) und der Modernisten (1908)* (Wiesbaden 1984) 68ff.

der Insel Buton in Südostceles und erscheinen, als Klassifikationsmodell, auch in der klassischen malaiischen Literatur (etwa im *Syair Perahu*).¹⁴

Die Verbindung der Shattāriyya mit der Theorie der sieben Seinsgrade war eine sehr innige. Aus Java wissen wir, dass dort die Shattāriyya noch im 19. Jahrhundert als *ilmu pitu* (die Lehre von den Sieben) oder auch als *ilmu Satariyah* (also nicht als *Tarekat Shattāriyya*) bezeichnet wurde. Es scheint, dass die Shattāriyya wesentliche Kennzeichen einer Sufi Bruderschaft entbehrte. Feste Bindungen zwischen Lehrer und Schüler gab es nicht und natürlich auch keine organisatorischen Strukturen.¹⁵ Auch in Malaya war die Shattāriyya fest mit der *ilmu martabat tujuh* verbunden.

Gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts war die Shattāriyya, in dieser Form, sowohl in Java als auch in Malaya diskreditiert.¹⁶ Das mystische System der sieben Seinsgrade, das so eng mit dem nun negativ besetzten Begriff *waḥdat al-wujūd*, verbunden war, war von "orthodoxeren" Vorstellungen beiseite geschoben worden. Die Shattāriyya hatte den Kontakt zum internationalen Islam verloren. Ihre religiösen Praktiken waren stark von lokalen magischen Vorstellungen durchsetzt; sie war aus der Eliten-Tradition gefallen und fand sich auf den theologisch schlüpfrigen Gelände volkstümlich gefärbter Traditionen wieder. Sie spielte zwar noch eine gewisse Rolle in archaischen, nativistisch geprägten Widerstandsaktionen gegen die Kolonialmacht, aber als islamische Kraft war sie bedeutungslos geworden.

¹⁴ Dieser Aspekt der malaiischen Kulturgeschichte wurde bisher noch nicht wahrgenommen, geschweige denn bearbeitet.

¹⁵ Snouck Hurgronje berichtet in einem fiktiven, aber auf Erfahrung beruhenden Stück über eine Aufnahme in die Shattāriyya und betont dabei, dass dem Kandidaten keinerlei Pflichten gegenüber dem Scheich auferlegt wurden. Es wurde also keine Lehrer-Schüler Beziehung hergestellt und auch keine regelmäßigen Kontakte vereinbart. Der Scheich gab allein die Formeln des *dzikirs* weiter. Siehe: 'Briefen van een wedono-pensioen', in *Verspreide Geschriften van Snouck Hurgronje* (Bonn und Leipzig 1924) iv, 188-190.

¹⁶ Es scheint allerdings im Angesicht der neu nach Südostasien drängenden reformierten Bruderschaften zu einer Renaissance der Shattāriyya gekommen zu sein. So zeigen die Mehrzahl der heute in Acheh, West- und Zentraljava existierenden Shattāriyya *silsilah*, dass es im 19. Jahrhundert eine neue Übertragungslinie gegeben hat. Diese Linie lief über die Nachkommen Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānīs. Auch Daud Abdullah Patani besass diese *silsila* und gab sie wahrscheinlich an Haji Yaakob bin Haji Abdul Halim (Tuan Padang) aus Kota Bharu/Kelantan weiter. Wie wirksam diese Shattāriyya Tradition allerdings in Kelantan wurde, ist nicht bekannt. Siehe dazu Nik Abdul Aziz b.Hj. Nik Hassan, 'Approaches to Islamic Religious Teachings in the State of Kelantan between 1860 and 1940', *Sari* i (1983).

In der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts schwappte eine Welle der islamischen Erneuerung durch die malaiischen Welt. Getragen wurde sie von einer Reihe von neuangekommenen Bruderschaften. In Sumatra und Teilen Javas war dies die Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya und die lokale *Tarekat Qādiriyya wa-Naqshbandiyya*. In Celebes spielte die Sammāniyya, die sich dort aus lokalen Gründen auch Khalvatiyyat Sammān nannte, etwas später eine ähnliche Rolle. Die Sammāniyya hatte auch in anderen Teilen des Archipels Erfolge (Westsumatra und javanische Nordküste) ohne dabei allerdings die Stärke der obengenannten Bruderschaften zu erreichen.

Auf der malaiischen Halbinsel war die Woge eines neuen islamischen Selbstbewusstseins schwächer als in den Inseln. Die neuen, reformierten Bruderschaften¹⁷ erreichten dort nicht die Präsenz und nicht die gleiche Wirksamkeit wie in der holländischen Kolonie. Das hing damit zusammen, dass die politischen Verhältnisse in Malaya kleinräumiger und "traditioneller" waren. Traditioneller in dem Sinn, dass die koloniale Durchdringung der malaiischen Staaten, vor allem der an der Ostküste gelegenen, wenig vorangeschritten war. Die lokalen "traditionellen" Herrschaftsformen waren noch in Takt, und es bestand deshalb kein Bedarf nach einer islamisch legitimierten Gegenorganisation. Die neuen Sufi Bruderschaften in Sumatra und Java waren ja oft eine Art "Ersatzorganisation" für zusammenbrechende lokale Institutionen. Vor allem deshalb wurden sie von der Kolonialmacht als Gefahr betrachtet.

Wenn die neuen Bruderschaften auf der malaiischen Halbinsel überhaupt Fuss fassen konnten, dann spielten sie dort eine andere Rolle. So wurde z.B. die Naqshbandiyya-Mazhariyya, die von Sayid Abdul Rahman bin Muḥammad al-Idrus, der gewöhnlich Tukku Paloh genannt wird, im Sultanat Trengganu verbreitet wurde, sehr schnell zur Bruderschaft der politischen und religiösen Elite.¹⁸ Die

¹⁷ Ich versuche, hier den Terminus *Neosufismus* zu vermeiden, da er von weiten Kreisen der Islamwissenschaft abgelehnt wird. Wir haben in Südostasien ja kaum schriftliche Zeugnisse die sich eignen würden, die Doktrin der "alten" und der "neuen" Bruderschaften miteinander zu vergleichen. Wir sehen nur die historischen Ergebnisse. Und da wird doch deutlich, dass diejenigen Bruderschaften, die man gewöhnlich dem "Neosufismus" zuordnet, eine andere (grössere) religiöse, soziale und politische Wirksamkeit entfalteten als ihre Vorgänger.

¹⁸ Zwar war sie 1926 auch entscheidend an der Rebellion in Ulu Trengganu (eine der wenigen Widerstandsbewegungen gegen die britischen Kolonialherren) beteiligt, aber die

enge Anbindung an die herrschenden Familien verhinderte die Breitenwirksamkeit dieser Bruderschaft in Trengganu. Sie wurde, zumindest unter den Bedingungen des *ancien régime*, keine Massenbewegung.¹⁹ Erst als das Sultanat in die Abhängigkeit der englischen Kolonialverwaltung geriet, trennten sich die Wege der politischen Elite und der Naqshbandiyya-Mazhariyya. Die Bruderschaft und ihre Führer wurden zum Focus der Rebellion von 1926 in Hulu Trengganu.

Gegen Ende des 19. und zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts erreichte in mehreren Wellen die Aḥmadiyya-Rashīdiyya die malaiische Halbinsel und begann sich als wichtigste Bruderschaft zu etablieren. Die aus der Tradition Aḥmad b. Idrīs al-Fāsī (1749-50-1837) stammende *Tarekat* wurde zuerst von Abdul Samad bin Muḥammad Saleh (1816-1891), der besser unter dem Namen Tuan Tabal bekannt ist, nach Kelantan gebracht. Tuan Tabal studierte mehrere Jahre in Mekka und kam wahrscheinlich um 1860 wieder in seine Heimat zurück.²⁰ Einer seiner Lehrer in Mekka war Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd, ein Schüler Aḥmad b. Idrīs'. Wahrscheinlich nahm Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd Tuan Tabal in die Aḥmadiyya auf und erteilte ihm die Lehrerlaubnis. Tuan Tabal liess sich nach seiner Rückkehr aus Mekka in der neuen Residenzstadt Kelantans, in Kota Bharu nieder. Hier gründete er eine Religionsschule, die bald Schüler aus ganz Malaya, sowie aus Sumatra, Südthailand und Kambodscha anzog. Tuan Tabal vermittelte ein religiöses System, in dem die exoterischen und esoterischen islamischen Wissenschaften in fruchtbarer Auseinandersetzung zueinander standen. Dass dazu die ekstatischen und synkretistischen Traditionen des malaiischen Islams überwunden werden mussten, versteht sich von selbst. Tuan Tabal wird als ruhiger, besonnener Mann geschildert, der durch geduldige Unterweisung sein Islamverständnis ver-

Engländer, die in Malaya eine sehr ignorante Islampolitik betrieben, nahmen diesen Umstand nicht wahr.

¹⁹ Ähnliches könnte man über die Naqshbandiyya-Mazhariyya, bzw. Naqshbandiyya-Khalīdiyya in Riau und Kedah sagen.

²⁰ Hamdan Hassan, *Tarekat Ahmadiyah di Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur 1990) 74. Falls Tuan Tabal wirklich um 1860 aus Mekka zurückkehrte, dann muss er vor 1840 geboren sein. Fauzi bin Haji Awang geht davon aus, dass Tuan Tabal in den späten 1860er Jahren nach Malaya zurückkehrte. 1869 wurde der erste Sohn Tuan Tabals, Haji Nik Wan Ahmad, in Kelantan/Malaya geboren. Siehe dazu: Fauzi bin Haji Awang, *Ahmadiyya Tariqah in Kelantan* (M.A.Thesis, University of Canterbury, Kent 1983).

breitete. Es war u. a. die Qualität seiner Gelehrsamkeit, die die Grundlagen für den religiösen Aufschwung in Kelantan zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts schuf. Obgleich Tuan Tabal in keiner seiner Schriften den Namen Ahmadiyya erwähnt, wissen wir doch aus anderen Dokumenten,²¹ dass er dieser Bruderschaft angehörte und sie weitergab. Sein *Tarekat* war keine Massen-, sondern eine Elitenorganisation. Da zu seiner Zeit dem grössten Teil der Muslime in Kelantan die rudimentärste religiöse Bildung fehlte, verbreitete er die Ahmadiyya nur in einem engen Kreis von Wissenden, der auch Mitglieder der lokalen Aristokratie einschloss.

Neben Tuan Tabals Übertragungslinie der Ahmadiyya nach Malaya gibt es noch drei andere Wege. Sie laufen über 1. Muḥammad Shafiʿi bin Muḥammad Saleh bin Abdur Rahman aus Kedah, 2. Haji Muḥammad Saʿid al-Linggi aus Negri Sembilan und 3. Sayyid Abu Hassan al-Azahari, einem arabischen Immigranten. Wir wollen uns hier hauptsächlich mit Haji Muḥammad Saʿid al-Linggi befassen. Nicht nur weil seine Übertragungslinie die wichtigste werden sollte, sondern auch weil er zum Auslöser des hier zu beschreibenden Konflikts wurde.

Muḥammad Saʿid bin Jamaluddin al-Linggī (1875-1926) stammte aus Negri Sembilan und war, wie viele Bewohner dieses Staates, von minangkabauscher Abstammung. Sein Vater, Jamaluddin al-Linggī, war ebenfalls ein bedeutender *ʿālim*, der lange Zeit in Mekka lebte. Seine Mutter stammte aus Patani/Südthailand. Muḥammad Saʿid bin Jamaluddin al-Linggī wurde 1875 in Mekka geboren und verbrachte dort die ersten sieben Jahre seines Lebens. Dannach ging er mit seiner Mutter zurück nach Patani. Patani war zu dieser Zeit das bedeutendsten islamischen Zentrum der malaiischen Welt und Muḥammad Saʿid legte dort den Grundstein für seine solide religiöse Ausbildung. Im Alter von siebzehn Jahren (1892) ging er zurück nach Mekka. Er studierte dort bei einer Reihe von arabischen ulama,²² sowie bei dem minangkabauschen "Proto-Modernisten" Aḥmad Khatīb (den wir später als heftigen Gegner der Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya kennenlernen werden). Weitere Lehrer waren Zain al-Din

²¹ Hamdan Hassan, *Tarekat Ahmadiyah di Malaysia* 244.

²² U.a.: Muhammad bin Sulaiman alias Hasbullah al-Maki, Sayyid Abu Bakar Shata, Scheich Umar Barakat al-Shami, Muhammad Sa'id Babsil Muhammad Yusuf al-Khayyat, Umar bin Abu Bakar Ba Junid, Ustaz Muhammad Sa'id Yamani.

al-Sumbāwī, Ahmad bin Muḥammad Zain al-Patanī, Muḥammad Nawawi Banten (1813-95) und Scheich Abdul Karim Banten. Also alle wesentlichen malaiischen Gelehrten die am Ende des Jahrhunderts im Ḥaramayn unterrichteten. Muḥammad Said ging auch nach Kairo, um an der al-Azhar Universität zu studieren. Allerdings blieb er nicht lange. Die Atmosphäre von Reform und Modernisierung, die das intellektuelle Klima der al-Azhar zu jener Zeit bestimmte, blieb ihm fremd. Schon nach acht Monaten kehrte er nach Mekka zurück und suchte sich dort einen Sufi Lehrer. Seine Wahl fiel auf Sayyid Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dandarāwī, den *khalīfa* der *Tarekat Aḥmadiyya-Rashīdiyya-Dandarāwiyya*. Nachdem er in die Traditionen der Bruderschaft eingeweiht worden war, wurde Muḥammad Saʿīd von seinem Lehrer Muḥammad al-Dandarāwī als dessen Vertreter für den Fernen Osten ernannt und mit der Verbreitung der Aḥmadiyya in Malaya beauftragt.

Muḥammad Saʿīd bin Jamaluddin al-Linggī kehrte um 1900 nach Malaya zurück und liess sich in seiner Heimat Ampangan, Negri Sembilan, nieder. Dort begann er, Mitglieder seiner Familie und Leute aus Seremban in die Aḥmadiyya aufzunehmen. Darunter waren viele Anhänger lokaler *Tarekat*, d.h. die Aḥmadiyya wurde eine Art Sammlungsbewegung für Anhänger lokaler (synkretistischer?) Bruderschaften. Um seinen Auftrag als *khalīfa* für Südostasien zu genügen, begab er sich bald auf Reisen. Zuerst ging er nach Kedah, wo er allerdings wenig Erfolg hatte. Darauf zog er weiter nach Kelantan und liess sich für einige Jahre in Kota Bharu nieder. In Kelantan, wo die Aḥmadiyya schon durch Tuan Tabal bekannt gemacht war, fielen seine Ideen auf fruchtbaren Boden. Allerdings unterschied sich seine Lehrmethode wesentlich von der seines Vorgängers. Während Tuan Tabal sich nur an religiös Gebildete wandte, stand Muḥammad Saʿīds *Dzikir*-Gemeinde allen offen. Sie zog bald, ob des ekstatischen Charakter ihrer mystischen Übungen, die Aufmerksamkeit der Öffentlichkeit auf sich. Während der *dzikir*-Veranstaltungen der Aḥmadiyya-Rashīdiyya fielen die Leute reihenweise in Verückung, hatten Visionen, trafen den Propheten und die Engel, waren *majdhūb*, trunken. Selbst der fünfjährige Sohn des Scheichs, der nach malaiischer Vorstellung *belum berakal*, noch ohne Wissen, war und bei solchen religiösen Übungen gar nicht anwesend sein sollte, hatte eine göttliche Vision: Allah präsentierte sich dem Kleinen kindgerecht als Vogel auf einem Baum.

Der schnelle Erfolg Muḥammad Saʿīds in Kota Bharu geht sicher

auch auf seine frühe Verbindung zu einem gewissen Scheich Ismail oder Tuk Wali Ismail zurück. Tuk Wali Ismail wurde zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts von seinen Anhängern in Kelantan als Heiliger verehrt, von seinen Gegnern dagegen als Verrückter gescholten.²³ Er war ein Scheich des *Tarekat Darajat*.²⁴ Später wurde er ein wegen seiner Segnungskraft (*baraka*) weit verehrter und gesuchter Heiler.²⁵ Die zwei Hauptvoraussetzungen für islamisches Charismas und Erfolg, nämlich die Fähigkeit Wunder zu wirken und fundiertes religiöses Wissen, wurden hier offensichtlich auf zwei Personen verteilt. Der einheimische Tuk Wali Ismail war für die Wunder zuständig, der zugereiste Muḥammad Saʿīd für das Wissen.

Die *dzikir*-Abende des Muḥammad Saʿīd in Kota Bharu wurden bald Gegenstand einer lebhaften religiösen Debatte. Während sie von den Anhängern der Aḥmadiyya für rechtsinnig erklärt wurden, betrachteten andere sie als unerlaubte Abweichung von der islamischen Norm. Um den gesellschaftlichen Frieden zu bewahren, gab der damalige Herrscher Kelantans, Raja Muḥammad IV., bei dem berühmten patanischen, in Mekka lebenden, Gelehrten Wan Aḥmad bin Muḥammad Zain al-Fathani,²⁶ ein Fatwa in Auftrag. Der Raja schrieb im Jahre 1321 oder 1323 H. (1903 oder 1905) einen Brief an Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Zain nach Mekka.²⁷ Darin schilderte er, dass

²³ Hamdan Hassan, *Tarekat Ahmadiyah di Malaysia* 62.

²⁴ *Darajat* oder *derajah* bedeutet Rang, Stufe, Grad. Vielleicht handelt es sich dabei um eine Filiale der Shaṭṭāriyya, die Bruderschaft des siebengradigen Wegs, *martabat tujuh*.

²⁵ Raymond Firth, 'Faith and Scepticism in Kelantan Village Magic', in William R. Roff (ed.), *Kelantan, Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State* 208.

²⁶ Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Fathani wurde 1856 in Kampung Sena Janjar, Jambu, Patani geboren. Er studierte religiöse Wissenschaften und islamische Medizin in Mekka, Jerusalem und Kairo. Später unterrichtete er an der al-Haram Moschee in Mekka und genoss unter malaiischen Studenten und bei den osmanischen Autoritäten grosses Ansehen. 1883 wurde er damit beauftragt, die neuingerichtete malaiische Druckerei in Mekka zu leiten; vgl. Christian Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century* (London 1931) 286. Als er 1908 starb, hinterliess er ein umfangreiches Werk und viele Schüler. Siehe: Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Fathani, *Sufi dan Wali Allah*, ed. Wan Muhammad Shagir Abdullah (Bandung 1985) und Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Fathani, *Fatwa tentang binatang hidup dua alam*, ed. Wan Muhammad Shagir Abdullah (Shah Alam 1990).

²⁷ Es existieren angeblich drei Versionen dieses Briefes. Siehe dazu: Hamdan Hassan, 'Kepustakaan Tarekat Ahmadiyah di Malaysia', *Dewan Sastra* (Nov. 1986) 78 und (Dez. 1986) 75-76. Der Brief wurde mehrmals veröffentlicht, z.B. bei Hamdan Hassan, *Tarekat Ahmadiyah di Malaysia* 60 und 243-45, bei Fauzi Bin Haji Awang, *Ahmadiyah Tariqah in Kelantan* 93-94 und Appendix F.

die Aḥmadiyya in Kelantan Zulauf von Frauen und Männern, Jungen und Alten, Wissenden und Unwissenden, von Fürstensöhnen und ulama hatte. Dass die Aḥmadīs beim *Dzikir* im Stehen ihre Körper wie beim Tanz hin und her bewegten, mit den Füßen stampften und manchmal dabei das Licht löschten. Einige würden in Ohnmacht fallen, andere behaupteten, dass sie hinter den Schleier der Verborgenheit geschaut und dort Gott, Muḥammad und seine Freunde, Himmel und Hölle erblickt hätten. Bei einigen hielt diese religiöse Erregung auch ausserhalb der *Dzikir*-Versammlungen an, sie weinten während des Freitagsgebetes, brachen in "Allah, Allah Rufe" aus und zogen die Umstehenden mit sich. Der Raja, der anmerkte, dass ähnliches bislang in Kelantan unbekannt war, war ob dieser Erweckungsbewegung sichtlich beunruhigt. Wahrscheinlich befürchtete er, dass die in Bewegung geratenen Massen ausser Kontrolle geraten könnten, dass sich eine soziale Bewegung mit unvorhersehbaren Konsequenzen entwickeln könnte. Er wollte von Wan Ahmad wissen ob diese Praktiken der Aḥmadiyya rechtsinnig oder häretisch seien.

Die Idrīsī Tradition stand in der Regel ekstatischen Praktiken eher skeptisch gegenüber. So wissen wir z.B., dass die Khatmiyya keine "extravaganten" Zustände förderte.²⁸ Auch Muḥammad al-Dandarāwī, der posthum als "one of the most faithful followers of the Way of Ibn Idrīs" bezeichnet wurde, scheint eine nüchterne Form des *Dzikir* gelehrt zu haben.²⁹ In Kelantan haben Tuan Tabal und später Abu Hassan al-Azahari (der wie Muḥammad Sa'īd seine *ijāza* von al-Dandarāwī erhielt), den Zustand des *majdhūb* bei ihren Anhängern nicht propagiert. Und selbst Muḥammad Sa'īd hat später in Negri Sembilan keine ekstatischen Zustände erlaubt. In einer Erinnerung, die sich auf Negri Sembilan im Jahr 1917 bezieht, heisst es:

'At the conclusion of the ratib, the participants, advanced students and noviciates alike, stood with linked hands in a circle as they chanted the formula "la-ila-ha-il-allah" in unisono.

²⁸ Spencer Trimingham, *Islam in the Sudan* (London 1949) 212 und 217.

²⁹ Dies galt allerdings nicht für seine Nachfolger. Sein Sohn Abū'l-ʿAbbās (gest. 1953) erklärte sich 1942 oder 1943 zum *nabī ʿĪsā*, zum Propheten Jesus, der nach dem Mahdi wiederkommen soll. Dies löste einen Sturm des Protestes innerhalb der Idrīsī Tradition hervor, sodass die Aḥmadiyya-Dandarawiyya vom "High Sufi Council" Ägyptens 1949 verboten wurde. Ali Salih Karrar, *The Sufi Brotherhoods in the Sudan until 1900* (Ph.D. Diss., Universität Bergen 1985) 124. Sein Sohn und Nachfolger, Amīr Faḍīl b. ʿAbbās, heute einer der reichsten Erdölhändler Ägyptens, bezeichnet deshalb seine Organisation nicht mehr *ṭarīqa Aḥmadiyya*, sondern *ʿuṣrat* (Familie) Aḥmadiyya.

As they swayed from side to side and as the tempo of the side-to-side movement increased and the formula chanted grew louder and louder, a novitiate shouted the word "Allah" and fell to the floor in the middle of the circle in a dead faint.

The rest of the participants continued to perform the ratib ... until Tuan Haji Said signaled the end of the rigorous ratib by clapping his hands. It took some time for the fallen novitiate to recover full consciousness, at which time Tuan Haji Said immediately advised him to discontinue from being a member of the Tarekat fraternity'.³⁰

Man kann deshalb davon ausgehen, dass die oben von Raja Kelantan geschilderten Symptome einer Massenhysterie nichts mit der Ideologie oder der Methode der Ahmadiyya an sich zu tun hatten. Es handelte sich hier offensichtlich um einen lokalen Sonderfall, der allein vor dem Hintergrund des historischen Dramas Kelantans zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts zu verstehen ist.

Das erste Jahrzehnt des 20. Jahrhunderts war eine Zeit dramatischer Umwälzungen in Kelantan. Das Land, das gerade erst unter der Herrschaft von Sultan Muḥammad II. (1839-86) aus einer Anzahl von "Sub-Staaten" zu einem Einheitsstaat zusammengeschweisst worden war, wurde durch eine Serie von bitteren Erbfolgestreitigkeiten abermals in Unruhe und Unsicherheit gestürzt. Die aristokratischen Eliten versuchten, wieder die direkte Kontrolle über einzelne Landesteile zu erlangen, sich aus der Abhängigkeit vom Wohlwollen der Zentralregierung zu befreien. Sie spalteten sich in mehrere Faktionen auf und spannten über das Land ein enges Netz von Gerüchten und Intrigen. Dabei verwickelten sie weite Teile der Bevölkerung in ihre Macht- und Prestigekämpfe. Die verworrene Situation provozierte das Eingreifen Siams, der Hegemonialmacht über die nördlichen malaiischen Staaten. Einen Höhepunkt erreichte die Konfusion nach dem Tode Sultan Mansurs (1900) und der Thronbesteigung von Tuan Long Senik als Raja Muḥammad IV. Er konnte sich gegen die Macht seiner übergangenen Onkel nicht durchsetzen, die sich weite Gebiete Kelantans angeeignet und der Bevölkerung zusätzliche Belastungen aufgebürdet hatten.³¹ Gleichzeitig geriet

³⁰ Muḥamad Said Tan Sri Datuk, *Memoirs of a Mentri Besar* (Singapore 1980?) 12-13.

³¹ Eine ausführliche Darstellung dieser Periode der Geschichte Kelantans findet sich in: Mohammed b. Nik Mohd. Salleh, 'Kelantan in Transition: 1891-1910', in William R. Roff (ed.), *Kelantan, Religion, Society and Politics in a Malay State* 22-61; siehe auch: J.M. Gullick, *Rulers and Residents Influence and Power in the Malay States, 1870-1920* (Singapore 1992) 143-48.

Kelantan in die Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Grossbritannien, das seinen Einfluss auf die nördliche malaiische Halbinsel auszudehnen versuchte, und Siam, das seine nominelle Oberhoheit über die Kedah, Perlis, Trengganu und Kelantan erhalten wollte. Im Zuge und als Teil dieser Auseinandersetzung gelang es der Duff Development Company, grosse Konzessionen in Kelantan zu erwerben und die Grundlagen kapitalistischer Wirtschaftsweisen zu legen. 1902 schlossen die Briten und Siamnesen, ohne Einbeziehung des Rajas von Kelantan, einen Vertrag ab, in dem die siamnesische Kontrolle der auswärtigen Beziehungen Kelantans festgeschrieben wurde. Ausserdem sollte der Raja einen "Berater" akzeptieren, dessen Anweisungen er (ausser in Fragen der islamischen Religion und der malaiischen Tradition) zu befolgen hatte. Dieser Berater wurde *de jure* von der siamnesischen Regierung in Bangkok ernannt, musste allerdings britischer Nationalität sein. Seine Bestellung und Ablösung bedurfte der Zustimmung der britischen Autoritäten in Singapur. Diese seltsame Konstruktion, in der ein Siam unterstelltes Kelantan den Ratschlägen eines Briten folgen musste, dauerte nur wenige Jahre. Der anglo-siamnesische Vertrag von 1909 löste Kelantan aus der siamnesischen Oberhoheit und stellte es unter britische Herrschaft. Kelantan wurde in der Folgezeit einer der *Nonfederated States of Malaya*.

Die Zeit zwischen 1900 und 1909 war in Kelantan eine Zeit der kulturellen und politischen Krise. Alle Grundlagen der bisherigen Ordnung wurden in Frage gestellt oder zerbrochen. Weite Kreise der Bevölkerung stürzten in kulturelle Verwirrung und Anarchie. Eine festgefügte Welt löste sich auf und mit ihr die überkommene Identität der Kelantanesen. Es ist nicht verwunderlich, dass diese Krisensituation zum fruchtbaren Nährboden für charismatische Bewegungen werden sollte. Die von Muḥammad Saʿīd um 1902/3 nach Kelantan gebrachte Aḥmadiyya wurde in diesem Klima der Verwirrung vorübergehend (unfreiwilliger?) Träger einer charismatischen Erweckungsbewegung. Die erschütterte Bevölkerung Kelantans sah in der Aḥmadiyya eine Möglichkeit zu neuer religiöser Identifikation. Muḥammad Saʿīd bot sich, durch seinen langen Aufenthalt in Mekka und durch seine überdurchschnittliche Gelehrsamkeit, als ideales Projektionsfeld für charismatische Erwartungen an. Zwar wissen wir nichts von einem Wunder, das, nach Max Weber, gewöhnlich den charismatischen Prozess in Gang setzt, aber da sprang ja vielleicht der oben erwähnte kelantanesische "Strassenheilige" Tuk Wali

Ismail in die Bresche. Die während des *dzikir* erfahrenen Visionen dürften ebenfalls die Präsenz des Wunderbaren, das den Malaiien sowieso näher steht als uns, erfahrbar gemacht haben. Allerdings kam es nicht zu einer Institutionalisierung des Charismas von Muḥammad Saʿīd. Er konnte sich nicht auf Dauer in Kota Bharu etablieren. Die Zeiten waren wohl zu bewegt. Wir wissen weder, wann er Kelantan verlassen hat, noch unter welchen Umständen dies geschah. Wahrscheinlich gab es einen gewissen Druck von Seiten des Herrschers und der islamischen Hierarchie. Sicher ist, dass seine Spuren verhältnismässig schnell verblassten.

Mit dem Ende der grossen Kulturkrise in Kelantan (das paradoxer Weise mit der Etablierung der britischen Ordnungsmacht einherging), kam auch das Ende des ekstatischen Charakters der Aḥmadiyya in Kelantan. Der *tarekat* wurde wieder Teil der nüchternen, "orthodoxen", islamischen Mystik, so wie er das auch schon unter Tuan Tabal gewesen war.

Die oben erwähnte Fatwa, die Raja Muḥammad IV. von Wan Ahmad bin Muḥammad Zain al-Fathani erbat, kann man übrigens auch als Beginn eines neuen Rollenverständnisses der Herrscher von Kelantan sehen. Durch den britischen Berater sämtlicher politischer Autorität beraubt, blieb dem Herrscher allein das Feld der Religion und des *Adat* als Exerzierplatz seiner reduzierten Macht. Sein Interesse an Fragen der religiösen Organisation nahm dementsprechend zu. Die 1915 gegründete *Majlis Ugama dan Isti'adat Malayu* sollte ein vorübergehender Höhepunkt dieser neuen Aktivitäten der kelantanesischen Herrscher werden.

Die Antwort Wan Ahmads ibn Muḥammad Zains auf die Briefe des Rajas war eine lange Fatwa, die allerdings keine klare Antwort auf den Kern der Frage des Herrschers — ist der Zustand des *majdhūb* (und damit die Aḥmadiyya) rechtsinnig oder nicht? — gibt. Wan Ahmad zitiert eine ganze Reihe von Äusserungen bekannter islamischer Autoren zum Thema *majdhūb*, die sowohl zustimmender als auch ablehnender Natur sind. Weil er wahrscheinlich über die genauen Machtverhältnisse in Kelantan nicht informiert und sich über die Absichten des Rajas im unklaren war, kommt er zur salomonischen Aussage, dass der Zustand der religiösen Verzückerung rechtsinnig ist, aber dass zu viele Scharlatane diesen Zustand simulieren. Als Mittel zur Erkenntnis Gottes hält er ihn für nicht hilfreich. Interessant ist, dass Wan Ahmad mitteilt, dass auch er ein Bruder der

Aḥmadiyya ist, aber dass er nie den Zustand des *majdhūb* erlebt hätte. Er bezeichnet den Gründer der Idrīsī Tradition, Aḥmad b. Idrīs und seine Nachfolger als grosse Heilige, deren Verehrung er allen Muslimen anrät. Als Nachfolger von Aḥmad b. Idrīs nennt er Ibrāhīm ar-Rashīd, Ahmad Danduri (Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dandarāwī) und Sidi Muḥammad Shakeh Kalifa (al-Shaykh Ibn Muḥammad b. Šālīḥ), also die wichtigsten Namen der Rashīdiyya Tradition in seiner Zeit.³² Der Versuch einiger traditioneller kelantanesischen ulama die Aḥmadiyya als unislamisch brandmarken zu lassen war damit gescheitert.

Doch dieser Versuch war nur ein Vorspiel. Die Rechtsinnigkeit der Aḥmadiyya wurde einige Jahre später erneut und nun wesentlich vehementer, in Frage gestellt. Diesmal durch einen Artikel der Zeitung *al-Imām*.³³ *Al-Imām* wurde 1906 gegründet und erschien nur zweieinhalb Jahre. Dennoch zählt sie zu den wichtigsten malaiischen Zeitungen dieses Jahrhunderts. *Al-Imām* war die erste Publikation, die die Ideen der Salafiyya nach Südostasien trug und dort verbreitete. Ihr publizistisches Vorbild war der ägyptische *al-Manār*, aus der sie auch Beiträge, in malaiischer Übersetzung, nachdruckte. In einem der ersten Leitartikel der Zeitung wurden folgende programatische Grundsätze aufgestellt, die bis heute islamisches Denken in Südostasien prägen. Es heisst dort:

‘Perhaps it may be said that we are most in need of skills of craftsmanship and agriculture, or knowledge of how to preserve our country from its enemies, or that we need education to rescue us from the slough of apathy and indolence, or that we must learn to unite for the common good. ... All this is true. But the one thing that will strengthen and realise all our desires is knowledge of the commands of our religion. For religion is the proven cure for all the ills of our community’.³⁴

Al-Imām wurde bald zur bedeutendsten Zeitung in Malaya und Niederländisch Indien und von weiten Kreisen der islamischen Elite Südasiens als religiöse Autorität anerkannt. *Al-Imām* bestand zwar nur zweieinhalb Jahre, fand aber sowohl in Indonesien als auch

³² Wan Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain al-Fathani, *Sufi dan Wali Allah* 54.

³³ *al-Imām* ii, no. 8, 4. 2.1908, 225-260. Der Beitrag wird auch ausführlich in Abu Bakar Hamzah, *Al-Imam. Its Role in Malay Society, 1906-1908* (Kuala Lumpur 1991) 37-49, zitiert und dokumentiert.

³⁴ Zitiert nach: William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya Press 1967) 56. Meine Hervorhebung.

in Malaya eine Reihe von Nachfolgern. Die Zeitung setzte den Standart, war der Beginn eines Typus. *Al-Imām* war die Fanfare der *Kaum Muda* (junge Gruppe), des südostasiatischen islamischen Modernismus. Als Gründer der Zeitung traten vier Personen in Erscheinung: Shaykh Mohammad Tahir bin Jalaluddin Al-Azhari aus Westsumatra, Sayyid Shaykh bin Ahmad Al-Hadi, ein Malaie arabischer Abstammung aus Malakka, Haji Abbas bin Mohammad Taha aus Singapur und Shaykh Mohammad Salim Al-Kalali aus Aceh in Nordsumatra. Der führende Kopf der Gruppe war Shaykh Mohammad Tahir. Er hatte zwölf Jahre bei seinem Cousin, dem minangkabauschen Proto-Modernisten Ahmad Khatib, in Mekka studiert. 1893 ging Shaykh Mohammad Tahir nach Kairo und studierte an der Azhar Astronomie. Mohammad Tahir verband den reformistischen Geist der malaio-islamischen Lehrer in Mekka mit den Ideen der ägyptischen Salafiyya und brachte so eine neue Qualität islamischer Reform nach Südostasien.

In der Ausgabe vom 4. Februar 1908 erschien in *al-Imām* ein Aufsatz, der über die Aḥmadiyya im Süden Siams handelte (Kelantan war zu dieser Zeit noch ein tributärer Staat Siams). Der Aufsatz erschien anonym, aber man kann davon ausgehen, dass sein Verfasser Shaykh Mohammad Tahir war. Er war bis März 1908 leitender Redakteur von *al-Imām*. Mohammad Tahir hatte bereits in der Ausgabe vom 5. Januar 1908 die Bruderschaften in Südostasien als grosses Hindernis für die Entwicklung der malaio-islamischen Kultur bezeichnet.³⁵ Offensichtlich hatte er von seinem Lehrer Ahmad Khatib dessen starke Abneigung gegen islamischen Bruderschaften übernommen. Ahmad Khatib hatte in Mekka einen persönlichen Konflikt mit Shaykh Suleiman Effendi, den einflussreichen *khalifa* der Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya. Beide konkurrierten um die Loyalität der zahlreiche Schüler aus dem malaiischen Archipel, die für das Einkommen der beiden Lehrer von erheblicher Bedeutung waren. Mohammad Tahir war, wie übrigens viele der salafitischen Vertreter in Südostasien, selbst Sohn eines bedeutenden Naqshbandiyya Scheichs in Minangkabau.

Mit seinem Artikels in *al-Imām* verfolgte Muḥammad Tahir eine

³⁵ Diesen Beitrag kenne ich nur als Zitat in: Mohd. Sarim b. Haji Mustajab, 'Syeikh Muhammad Tahir Jalaluddin Al-Falaki, Pelopor Gerakan Islah Islamiyyah di Tanah Melayu', *Malaysia in History* xx, 2 (1977) 10.

ganz andere Absicht als der Raja von Kelantan einige Jahre früher. Während der Raja versuchte, eine soziale Bewegung in den Griff zu bekommen, ging es *al-Imām* allein um ein ideologisches Problem, um die Polemik gegen die Bruderschaften im allgemeinen und die Aḥmadiyya im besonderen. Der Autor begriff dies als notwendige Auseinandersetzung mit vermeintlichen Obskurantismus und erhob sich selbst bzw. die Zeitung *al-Imām* zur Fatwa-gebenden Instanz. Aus dem Inhalt des Aufsatzes geht allerdings hervor, dass der Autor mit dem wahren Wesen der Aḥmadiyya-Rashīdiyya nicht vertraut war.

Al-Imām berichtet über einen Muslim aus Patani/Südthailand,³⁶ der in seiner Heimat *dzikir*-Abende eines Aḥmadiyya Scheichs besucht haben will. Der Mann aus Patani schickte der Zeitung einen Katalog von Fragen zu gewissen Übungen der *Tarekat* Aḥmadiyya. Dieser Mann aus Patani ist allerdings eine Konstruktion. Bei dem angeblich aus seiner Feder stammenden Brief, handelt es sich um nichts anderes als um das obenerwähnte Schreiben, das der Raja von Kelantan an Ahmad bin Muḥammad al-Patani nach Mekka geschickt hatte. Allerdings bekommt dieser Brief durch die Absicht und die Zitierweise in *al-Imām* einen eindeutig feindseligen Charakter. Der Artikel berichtet über einen namentlich nicht genannten Aḥmadiyya Scheich (gemeint ist Muḥammad Saʿīd al-Linggī), der mit grossem Erfolg seine Bruderschaft in Kelantan verbreitete. *Al-Imām* wirft ihm vor, dass er alle Menschen, die zu ihm kamen (selbst wenn es ihnen am grundlegenden Wissen der islamischen Pflichtenlehre mangelte) in die Aḥmadiyya aufnahm. Ein Vorwurf, der übrigens immer wieder von den Gegnern der Sufis im malaiischen Archipel erhoben wurde.

“Unter jenen, die mystische Unterweisung suchen, sind aber auch Mitglieder der königlichen Familie und Kinder von Ministern. Das ist so, weil der Guru der *Tarekat* den Leuten versichert, dass jeder, der in die Bruderschaft eintritt, auch eine Garantie für den Eintritt ins Paradies erwirbt. Die *Tarekat* sei wie Feuer, er zeitigt sofortige Wirkung.”³⁷

Der fiktive Mann aus Patani beschreibt auch einen *Dzikir*-Abend an den er teilgenommen haben will:

“... das Licht wird gelöscht und man steht im Kreis mit brennenden Weihrauchschalen in

³⁶ Patani, eine Region die im Norden an Kelantan anschliesst und die zu dieser Zeit kein Herrscherhaus hatte.

³⁷ *al-Imām* ii, No. 8 (1908) 256.

den Händen. Dabei spricht man unter schwingenden Körperbewegungen den *Dzikir*. Es ist eine Bewegung die den arabischen Tänzen *Ta'in* und *Takassur* ähnelt. Dabei stampfen die Anwesenden mit den Füßen auf den Boden und erzeugen damit den Klang einer grossen Trommel, der die Nachbarn aus ihrem Schlaf aufschreckt. Wenn der Höhepunkt dieses getanzten *Dzikirs* erreicht ist, wird er durch einen Zischlaut des Gurus angehalten. Dabei fallen einige wie betäubt nieder und müssen vom Guru durch sanfte Rutenschläge zurückgeholt werden. Während der Entrücktheit (*majdhüb*) rufen sie mit lauter Stimme aus, dass sie das Verborgene gesehen haben, den Propheten und seine Familie, Menschen in Gräbern, im Paradies oder in der Hölle.“³⁸

Auch die Geschichte des fünfjährigen Sohnes des Scheiches, der Gott auf einen Baum sitzen sah, wird wiederholt.³⁹ Der Guru *Tarekat* versichert seinen Schülern, dass ihre Visionen kein Werk des Teufels seien, sondern Manifestationen des göttlichen Willens. Auf die Bemerkung, dass frühere Anhänger der Rashīdiyya (Scheich Tuan Tabal) diese Visionen nicht kannten, soll der Guru geantwortet haben, dass es ihnen wohl an der nötigen spirituellen Erfahrung gemangelt habe.

Der fiktive Briefschreiber aus Patani bittet *al-Imām* um eine Stellungnahme. Shaykh Mohammad Tahir, der Verfasser des Artikels, konstruierte die fünf folgenden Fragen (die im ursprünglichen Brief des Rajas von Kelantan, in dieser Form, nicht zu finden sind):

1. Gab es zur Zeit des Propheten Bruderschaften? Sind diese Teil der islamischen Tradition? Welche Verse des Korans oder welcher Hadith beziehen sich auf sie?

2. Wenn es in der Zeit des Propheten keine *Tarekat* gegeben hat, müssen sie dann als Neuerungen (*bid'a*) verstanden werden? Wenn ja, sind sie *bid'a ḥasana* (gute Neuerungen) oder *bid'a dżalala* (schlechte Neuerungen)? Wenn sie *bid'a ḥasana* sind, was ist dann die genaue Definition von guten Neuerungen?

3. Wenn *Tarekat bid'a dżalala* sind, ist es dann für die Herrscher und die Autoritäten, die für diese Fragen zuständig sind, verpflichtend, die Verbreitung der Lehren dieser *Tarekat* zu verbieten?

4. Wie stellt sich die Situation der *Tarekat*-Scheiche dar, wenn Bruderschaften verboten werden. Sind die Herrscher und die Autoritäten, die für diese Fragen zuständig sind, verpflichtet, sie aus ihrem

³⁸ Ibid. 255-56.

³⁹ Der nicht älter gewordene Sohn beweist, dass es sich hier um die gleichen Vorgänge handelt, die der Raja Kelantan schon Jahre früher beschrieben hat.

Territorium zu verbannen, so dass sie ihre falschen Lehren nicht weiter verbreiten können?

5. Sind die Herrscher verpflichtet, diejenigen, die die Lehren der *Tarekat* nicht aufgeben, zu bestrafen?⁴⁰

Die Antworten die *al-Imām* auf diese fünf Fragen gibt, können folgendermassen zusammengefasst werden:

Zu Zeiten des Propheten gab es keine *Tarekat*. Weder im Koran noch im *Ḥadīth* sind sie erwähnt. Deshalb sind sie *bid'ā*, Neuerungen. Bevor nun die Frage, ob sie gute oder schlechte Neuerungen sind, beantwortet wird, streut der Autor einige Gerüchte ein. Z.B., dass es während der *dzikir*-Treffen zu sexuellen Handlungen kommen soll und dass die *Tarekat* Scheiche oft beitrtrittswillige Frauen sexuell missbrauchen. Dies sind stereotype Behauptungen, die in jeder Polemik gegen *Tarekat* im malaiischen Archipel vorkommen. Diese absichtsvoll gestreuten Gerüchte bereiteten dann auch die nächste Antwort vor, nämlich, dass *Tarekat* verbotene Neuerungen sind. Deshalb müssen die Herrscher oder die zuständigen Autoritäten in ihrem Herrschaftsbereich die Bruderschaften verbieten. *Tarekat*-Scheiche müssen vertrieben und *Tarekat*-Anhänger, die ihre verwerfliche Praxis nicht aufgeben, bestraft werden.⁴¹

Mit diesem frontalen Angriff schlug *al-Imām* mehrere Fliegen mit einer Klappe. Erstens wurde die Legitimation aller *Tarekat* in der malaiischen Welt in Abrede gestellt. Zweitens übte *al-Imām* deutlich Kritik an der religiösen Autorität (des damals gerade verstorbenen) Wan Aḥmad bin Muḥammad al-Fatanis, der ja in seiner Fatwa die Aḥmadiyya als rechtsinnige Bruderschaft anerkannt hatte. Drittens wird jenen malaiischen Herrschern, die Bruderschaften auf ihren Territorien dulden, Vernachlässigung ihrer religiösen Aufsichtspflicht vorgeworfen und viertens versuchen die salafitischen Autoren *al-Imām* als Fatwa-gebende Institution in der malaiischen Welt zu etablieren.

Ich habe schon erwähnt, dass es auch früher kritische Äusserungen zu den Sufi Bruderschaften in der malaiischen Welt gegeben hat. Etwa den Angriff des Hadhramis Sālim b. Samīrs auf Ismail Minangkabau, der die Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya in den 1850er Jahren nach Riau brachte, oder die Broschüre *al-Naṣīḥa li'l-*

⁴⁰ *al-Imām* ii, No. 8 (1908) 257.

⁴¹ *al-Imām* ii, No. 8 (1908) 277.

mutalabbisīn bi'l-tarīqa, die von Sayyid Usman Ibn Abdullah Ibn Akil Ibn Al-Alawī in den 1880er Jahren (zur grossen Freude der Kolonialverwaltung und Snouck Hurgronjes) in Umlauf gebracht wurde.⁴² Allerdings sprachen sich beide Autoren nicht gegen die Bruderschaften als solche aus, sondern nur gegen gewisse Abweichungen und gegen den geringen Wissensstand ihrer Scheiche und Anhänger. Nicht Bruderschaften waren das Problem, sondern unwisende Brüder!⁴³

Zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts wurde die Kritik heftiger. Der Sumatraner Ahmad Khatib bin Abdu'l Latif (1852-1915), der schon mehrmals erwähnte Cousin und Lehrer von Muḥammad Tahir, veröffentlichte zwischen 1906 und 1908 drei scharfe Angriffe auf die Naqshbandiyya, die die Rechtsinnigkeit aller *Tarekat* in Frage stellen. Mohammad Tahirs Beitrag in *al-Imām* muss man in Verbindung mit den drei *Risālas* seines Lehrers sehen. Allerdings ging Mohammad Tahir noch weiter als sein Lehrer. Ahmad Khatib qualifizierte die Naqshbandiyya zwar als *bid'ā* und *syirk*, sprach jedoch keine politische Empfehlung aus und forderte auch kein staatliches Verbot dieser Bruderschaft. Der *al-Imām* Artikel mahnte dagegen ordnungspolitische Massnahmen gegen *Tarekat* Führer und sogar gegen religiöse Aufsichtsbehörden, die ihrer Pflicht nicht nachkommen, an. Der Aufsatz wird dadurch zur schärfsten gedruckten Polemik gegen islamische Bruderschaften und ihre Anhänger in Südostasien.

Es ist nicht nachzuweisen, dass die extremen Aussagen des *al-Imām* Artikels direkte Auswirkungen auf die Situation der Bruderschaften in Malaya hatten. Aber die spätere Verbannung (1917) des Aḥmadiyya Scheichs Abu Hassan al-Azahari aus Kelantan, könnte innerislamisch durchaus mit den theologischen Ansichten *al-Imāms* gerechtfertigt worden sein. In einem Beschluss der *Majlis Ugama Kelantan* wurde ihm vorgeworfen, exzessive religiöse Begeisterung hervorgerufen zu haben.⁴⁴ Der gleiche Beschluss fordert, dass in Zu-

⁴² Siehe dazu Martin van Bruinessen, *Tarekat Naqshbandiyyah di Indonesia* (Bandung 1992) 109-10.

⁴³ Die arabischen Protagonisten dieser Polemiken gingen allerdings implizit davon aus, dass ein malaiischer Muslim weder die spirituelle noch die intellektuelle Fähigkeiten besitzen kann, um das nötige Wissen zu erwerben.

⁴⁴ William Roff, 'The Origins and Early Years of the Majlis Ugama', in W. Roff (ed.), *Kelantan* (Kuala Lumpur 1974) 140, Anm. 101.

kunft Sufi Lehrer eine staatliche Lehrerlaubnis erwerben und den Inhalt ihrer Lehren überprüfen lassen müssen.⁴⁵

Die kompromisslose Haltung Shaykh Mohammad Tahirs gegenüber den Bruderschaften wurde sicher nicht von den anderen drei Herausgebern von *al-Imām* mitgetragen. Als es (fast dreissig Jahre später) in Kelantan zu einer grossen Debatte über die Zulässigkeit des Haltens von Hunden als Haustiere kam, befand sich in der grossen Koalition der Befürworter, neben dem Aḥmadi Scheich Wan Musa, auch der ehemalige Herausgeber von *al-Imām* Hajji Abas Taha.⁴⁶ Auch aus Indonesien wissen wir, dass der grössere Teil der Salafiyya eine relativ neutrale Haltung gegenüber islamischen Bruderschaften einnahm.

Mohammad Tahir, der erst im Jahr 1954 starb, wurde in der Folgezeit ein einflussreicher religiöser Berater an mehreren malaiischen Fürstenhäusern, und es ist anzunehmen, dass er seine ablehnende Haltung gegenüber Sufi Bruderschaften aufrechterhielt und weiter gab. In jedem Fall kann man sagen, dass die simple Intoleranz seines Artikels im Laufe der Zeit Wirkung zeigte. In Malaysia besteht heute ein grosser Druck auf jede Form von religiöser Äusserung, die vom skripturalistischen, am Gesetz orientierten, engen Islamverständnis abweicht. Bruderschaften sind da besonders suspekt und sind ständig der Gefahr ausgesetzt, als *ajaran sesat* (falsche Lehre) verleumdet zu werden. Die Aḥmadiyya entging diesem Schicksal lange dadurch, da sie über qualifizierte Führer verfügte, die selbst zur etablierten Elite der *Ummat Islam* Malaysias aufstiegen. So wurde der Sohn von Muḥammad Saʿīd al-Linggi, Ahmad bin Muḥammad Saʿīd, 1950 Mufti von Negri Sembilan. Aber in jüngerer Zeit und im Rahmen der zunehmenden Revitalisierung und Skripturalisierung des malaiischen Islam, nehmen die Angriffe auf Sufi Bruderschaften wieder zu. Oft wird überhaupt keine Trennungslinie zwischen *ajaran sesat* und *tarekat* mehr gezogen.⁴⁷

Es wäre sicher töricht und überzogen, den *al-Imām* Artikel von

⁴⁵ Der wahre Grund der Verbannung Abu Hassans war seine enge Beziehung zu Hadschi Wan Musa, dem Sohn Tuan Tabals. Wan Musa hatte ein sehr gespanntes Verhältnis zur Herrscherfamilie, da er sich weigerte religiöse "Gefälligkeitsgutachten" abzuliefern.

⁴⁶ William Roff, 'Whence Cometh the Law? Dog Salvia in Kelantan, 1937', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* xxv, 2 (1983) 323-38.

⁴⁷ Siehe z.B. John Bousfield, 'Adventures and Misadventures of the New Sufis: Islamic Spiritual Groups in Contemporary Malaysia', *Sojourn* viii, 2 (1993) 328-44.

1908 für die gegenwärtige Entwicklung in Malaysia verantwortlich zu machen. Wahrscheinlich gibt es im Land keine Handvoll Menschen, die den Inhalt dieses Artikels kennen. Aber es steht ausser Zweifel, dass der Geist, den die frühe Salafiyya nach Malaya getragen hat, eine wesentliche Grundlage für die Entwicklung des malaischen Islam im 20. Jahrhundert ist. Und den Sufi Bruderschaften wurde durch diese Entwicklung das Leben nicht leichter gemacht.

POSTSCRIPT

The contents of the preceding papers make clear that Islamic mysticism was contested during the formative first three centuries of Islam up to the present. Positions taken and arguments used point to a considerable fluidity in the divide between Sufism and its opponents. Moreover, some of the harshest critics of certain aspects of Sufism were sometimes Sufis themselves. The occasional use of anti-Sufi rhetoric by Sufis against their own ilk further blurs the picture of a clear-cut dichotomy and points to the impracticality of a paradigmatic approach based on a presumed existence of ulama-Sufi opposition. In addition, even where the opponents adhere to conceptions of Islam which are absolutely incompatible with a mystical conception, this does not necessarily exclude the possibility of a relationship of functional co-operation between those at both ends of the continuum of Sufism versus anti-Sufism. A case in point is the emerging alliance between marabouts and the Wāḥḥābī inspired anti-secular Islamic reform movement in Senegal. Yet, in the end, such observations should not underestimate the fundamental differences which exist between various conceptions of Islam. Any effort to play down these differences, to ignore them, or to blame those who are interested in understanding these differences as detractors from all that unites the *umma*, would appear to be due to ignorance, naïveté, or political expediency. Radically different conceptions of Islam *do* exist, and what the contest charted in this volume is basically about is eradication or survival of different Islamic world views, often in conjunction with a struggle for political power. In fact, many of the debates and controversies covered or referred to can best be understood in the context of rivalries between religious leaders often in alliance with or as representatives of political authority. Yet, mystical Islam is ultimately part of the contest for the dominance or acceptance of a notion of “true” or “correct Islam” itself. Such notions are identical with and derived from dogmatic positions which may well be incompatible and, when that is the case, necessarily result in competing versions of Islam.

Whenever one attempts to find reasons for the success or failure of one contested version of Islam over another, it is imperative to explore the particular social, political, and economic contexts of the

contests in their historical dimensions. To disentangle the “purely” dogmatic and theological from the “purely” social, political, and economic factors may be facilitated or complicated by one's definitions. Yet, as a matter of basic methodology the question which should be asked concerning any case of opposition to or polemic involving Sufism remains the same: Did the historical context generate contest, or did contest generate the historical context? In view of the lack or paucity of relevant sources pertaining to certain areas in certain periods this question may be comparable to that of which came first “the chicken or the egg”. Yet, all of the preceding papers, which are often characterised by abundant contextual information, would seem to give answers, implicitly or explicitly, to this question.

It would be wrong to look upon the adherents of mystical conceptions of Islam as eternal victims of an anti- or a non-Sufi oriented religious establishment. Militant Sufi movements did exist, and sometimes, as in West Africa, resulted in viable polities; but for the most part these have been left out of consideration in the preceding papers. It would seem apposite, however, to point out that in cases where a Sufi order came to dominate a polity (e.g. the Qādiriyya in Sokoto; the Shādhiliyya in the Comores), or transformed itself into one (e.g. the Idrisiyya in ʿAsīr; the Sanūsiyya in Cyrenaica and neighbouring regions), this did not entail persecution of those who were not in agreement with Sufism as adhered to and practised by those in power. A comparative study of such “Sufi states” or “Sufi polities” would no doubt be fruitful,¹ and would certainly result in more comprehensive knowledge of “political Sufism” than we have at present.² Further knowledge of Sufism in power would not only imply an obvious addition to our knowledge of the history of Islamic mysticism and its institutions, it might also entail a realistic reappraisal of some of the more romantic notions of Sufism in the West. In a sense, Sufism is, indeed, the other side of Islam, the non- or less-legalistic side. This, however, does not necessarily imply tolerance, democratic attitudes, concern for human rights, and all the

¹ For an initial attempt at comparison, see B. G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth-Century Africa* (Cambridge 1976).

² The notion of “political Sufism” among scholars appears to lack theoretical grounding. In this connection, a recent example is Thierry Zarcone, ‘Political Sufism and the Emirate of Kashgaria (End of the 19th Century): The Role of the Ambassador Yaʿqūb Xān Tūra’, in Anke von Kügelgen et. al., *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Centuries*. Vol. 2: *Inter-Regional and Inter-Ethnic Relations* (Berlin 1998) 153–165. The article, however, does provide useful factual information.

other cultural values the West sees as characteristic of its own cultures. Neither does it necessarily imply the absence of attitudes towards the West which are less antagonistic than the ones cultivated by the movements which tend to be labelled “Islamic fundamentalism”.

The geographical area covered by the various contributions and their cumulative historical scope are considerable. Yet, the picture is not as comprehensive as one would wish and a number of movements, areas and periods have not been covered. This would seem to reflect the state of our knowledge and indicates the gaps which remain to be filled in. Thus, the Mu‘tazila and the Zaydī positions are covered, but a contribution on the Ibādiyya and Sufism is sadly lacking. Similarly, criticism from the political reformers with Europe-oriented ideas for modernisation, and inspired by ill-digested European ideas of secularism and nationalism, is only referred to incidentally; and perhaps rightly so, since their criticism hardly surpassed qualifying Sufism as backward, superstitious, and as detrimental to social and economic development. Looking at the geographical areas covered, the Middle-East is under-represented, while other areas, e.g. East Africa, Republican Turkey, the Volga-Ural region, and the Caucasus, are not covered at all. Moreover, polemics and opposition concerning Sufism in some dynastic empires, e.g. the Aq Qoyunlu and the Safavid empires, are not touched upon. One would also have wished to have contributions on some of the more radical Sufi movements on the Indian Subcontinent which elicited opposition of a violent kind, e.g. the movement involving the *murids* and leaders of the Qādiri-Naqshbandī lineage based at Kingri in Sindh. The *sajjāda-nishīns* of this lineage, known as the Pir Pagaros, and their followers were attacked by ulama and persecuted by the British, who executed their then leader in 1943.³

Opposition to Sufism by the colonial powers is touched upon in a number of papers, but receives a far from comprehensive treatment. With variations and fluctuations over time, Sufi orders co-operated with or opposed colonial authorities. A comprehensive study of the Sufi orders and the colonial encounter would greatly enhance our knowledge of both, the history of European colonialism and the history of the orders.

To point to incomplete coverage and gaps in our knowledge of the

³ Criticism and opposition from the ulama have hardly been charted; cf. Sarah F.D. Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power. The Pirs of Sind, 1843-1947* (Cambridge 1992) 66f., 135f.

history of opposition to Sufism is not intended as an inventory of deficiencies in the present volume, but simply as an enumeration of a few areas where worthwhile contributions to scholarly knowledge are still to be made. It seems unlikely, however, that such studies in the future will add new elements to our knowledge of the issues which are central to the polemics concerning Sufism, and have been so at least since the twelfth century. In fact, it is the repetitive nature of the contents of anti-Sufi rhetoric which is perhaps most striking: arguments and issues are recycled over and over again, and surprisingly little that is new is introduced. The debates concerning Ibn al-ʿArabi's teaching illustrate this point. Yet, the fact that debates concerning Sufism have had continuity, indeed up to the very present, is to be evaluated positively: it means that Islamic thought is alive, that a variety of positions exists concerning what Islam is or should be, and that we are far removed from the kind of monolithic uniform Islam some would like to see. In this connection it may be apposite to recall the saying of the Prophet: *Ikhtilāf ummatī rahmatun* — "Variety in my community is a blessing".

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INDICES

1. PERSONAL NAMES

- al-ʿAbbās, Aḥmad 416
 Abbas bin Mohammad Taha 750, 755
 al-ʿAbd, ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Muḥammad 1
 ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Ḥakam 57
 ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Abā
 Buṭayn 146
 ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal 72
 ʿAbd Allāh b. Fūḍī 361, 362
 ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥasan al-Dawwārī 134
 ʿAbd Allāh b. Ibrāhīm b. Sayf al-Najdī
 148
 ʿAbd Allāh b. Khubayq al-Anṭākī 73
 ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-
 Wahhāb 146
 ʿAbd Allāh b. Naṣr 176
 ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Qāsim 137
 ʿAbd Allāh b. Zayd al-ʿAnṣī 140
 ʿAbd Allāh Bey Ḥamza 280
 ʿAbd Allāh, father of the Mahdī 269
 ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad 252
 ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ḥabshī (al-
 Hibshī) —> al-Ḥabshī
 ʿAbd Allāh, the qadī of Bayḍāʾ 80
 ʿAbd Allāh al-Zabūshī 265
 ʿAbd Allāh al-Zāhid 183
 ʿAbd Allāh-i Anṣārī 29, 30, 56, 71, 75,
 76, 86, 425
 ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz 581
 ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Qayrawānī 217
 ʿAbd al-Baqī b. Muḥammad b. Burriyāl
 187
 Abd al-Basir 389
 ʿAbd al-Ghafūr b. Ismāʿīl b. Khalaf al-
 Sakūnī 190
 ʿAbd al-Ghafūr Muḥyī al-Dīn Shāh 669
 ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq b. Ismāʿīl al-Bādīsī 212,
 216
 ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith 422, 423
 ʿAbd al-Ḥayy b. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ḥasanī
 425
 ʿAbd al-Jabbār, al-Qāḍī 32, 67, 78, 91
 ʿAbd al-Karīm, al-Ḥājī Aḥmad 373
 ʿAbd al-Karīm Lafgūn 259, 260, 261,
 263, 264, 266
 ʿAbd al-Khāliq, Maḥmūd 245
 ʿAbd al-Khāliq, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān 94
 ʿAbd al-Laṭīf b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b.
 Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-
 Wahhāb 146
 ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Qudṣī 612
 ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb al-Sulamī 175
 ʿAbd al-Muqtadir Banbānī 420
 ʿAbd al-Nabī 446, 447
 ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad Bello 381
 ʿAbd al-Qādir Dāmullā 546, 547, 550
 ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī 30, 31, 62, 151,
 283, 293, 309, 360, 361, 363, 370,
 371, 394, 406, 427, 475, 618, 709
 ʿAbd al-Qādir Pasha Ḥilmī 280
 ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Rāshidī 264
 ʿAbd al-Quddūs Gangōhī 447, 448
 ʿAbd al-Raḥīm 79
 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Ḥātim 72
 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥasan b.
 Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb 146
 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad Aḥmad
 al-Mahdī 269
 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III 181, 183
 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Tāsūlī 251
 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Tijānī 248
 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān w. al-Nujūmī 273
 ʿAbd al-Raʿūf al-Sinkilī (Singkel) 19,
 673, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 735
 ʿAbd al-Rāziq, Muṣṭafā 318
 ʿAbd al-Salām al-Qādirī 169
 ʿAbd al-Ṣamad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAlawī
 al-Dāmaghānī 142
 ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī 19
 ʿAbd al-Wahhāb 450
 ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Muttaqī 422

- °Abd al-Wahhāb al-Warrāq 73, 74
 °Abd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd 2, 27, 28, 68
 °Abd al-Wāsi° b. Yaḥyā al-Wāsi°i 136
 °Abdak al-Šūfi 288
 °Abdallāh (Aliyu Babba) 363
 °Abdallāh b. Aḥmad b. °Āmir 63
 al-°Abdarī al-Tilimsānī, Muḥammad 211
 °Abdu'l-Ghanī 455
 °Abdu'l-Ḥayy 454
 °Abduh, Muḥammad 42, 94, 268, 303, 304, 310, 313, 314, 318, 337, 592, 597, 717
 Abdul Hadi al-Qaderi, Maulana 393, 400, 401, 402
 Abdul Karim b. Muhammad Amrullah (Haji Rasul) 715
 Abdul Karim Banten 743
 Abdul Malik bin Abdullah 737
 Abdul Muluk, Sultan 687
 Abdul Qadir Jilāni, Hadhrat Sayyid —> °Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī
 Abdul Rahman bin Muḥammad al-Idrus, Sayid 740
 Abdul Samad bin Muḥammad Saleh 741
 Abdulkadir, Dandatti 371
 Abdulla, H.W.M. 684
 Abdullaev, Mukhtarkhan 537, 539
 Abdullah b. Abdul Malik 737
 °Abdullāh Jān 479, 481, 482
 Abdullah, Umar 390, 399
 °Abdullāhi b. Muḥammad Karrār b. °Ali, the Khalifa 271, 272, 275, 277, 278, 281
 Abdulmuhyi 737
 °Abdunnabi 480
 Abdur Ra°uf al-Singkeli —> °Abd al-Ra°uf al-Singili
 Abdur Rauf, Abubakr 402
 Abdur Rauf Soofi, Maulana 399, 401, 402, 408, 410
 Abdus Salaam, Imam Abdullah Kadi 390
 Abduvakhitov, Abdujabar 539
 Abdūlhamit, °Abdulḥamīd, Sultan 38, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299
 °Abed Mia, Maulana Sufi Sayyed Muḥammad 391
 Ābidi, Maḥmūd 498
 Abū'l-°Abbās Aḥmad b. °Ali al-Būni 139
 Abū'l-°Abbās Aḥmad b. Yūsuf al-Rāshidi 252
 Abū °Abd Allāh 252
 Abū °Abd Allāh al-°Alawī 131
 Abū °Abd Allāh b. al-Jallā° 73, 76
 Abū °Abd Allāh b. Khuzayma 74
 Abū °Abd Allāh Ḥusayn b. °Ali al-Bašri 78
 Abū °Abdallāh Muḥammad b. Ghāzi al-Miknāsi 216
 Abū °Abdallāh al-Zubayrī 60
 Abū Aḥmad Ja°far b. °Abd Allāh 199
 Abū °Ali b. al-Kātib 88
 Abū °Ali al-Sarrāj 177, 178
 Abū °Azīz al-Ḥannāshi 263
 Abu Bakar, Shafie 737
 Abū Bakr b. al-°Arabī 185, 190, 192, 193, 214
 Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq 129, 134, 360, 404, 433, 713, 715
 Abū Bakr al-Yaḥyawī, Raḍī al-Dīn 106
 Abū Dā°ūd al-Sijistānī 60
 Abū Dāhish 170
 Abū'l-Faḍl-i °Allāmī 424, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450
 Abū Gayl 580
 Abū'l-Ghayth b. Jamil 106, 128
 Abū Ḥafṣ 72, 73
 Abū Ḥammū II 252
 Abū Ḥammū III 253
 Abū Ḥamza al-Baghdādī 54, 75
 Abū Ḥanifa 130, 283, 475, 487, 615
 Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Ash°arī —> al-Ash°arī
 Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Marīnī 215, 215
 Abu Hassan al-Azahari 742, 745, 754
 Abū Ḥudayda 149
 Abū Ḥulmān al-Fārisī al-Dimashqī 62, 616
 Abū Hurayra 463
 Abū'l-Ḥusayn al-Bašrī 6, 130, 131
 Abū °Imrān al-Raqāshī 69
 Abū Ishāq al-Shirāzi 30, 79
 Abū Ja°far al-Malaṭī 63
 Abū Ja°far al-Ṭakhāwī 118
 Abū'l-Khashshāb, Ibrāhīm °Ali 316
 Abū'l-Khayr 184
 Abū'l-Khayr b. Shaykh b. Ḥajar 665
 Abū Madyan 199, 216, 221, 248, 251
 Abū Maḥallī 262
 Abū Muslim 46
 Abū Našr al-Tammār 72

- Abū Nuʿaym al-Isfahānī 29, 48, 59, 73,
74, 75
Abū'l-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sirāfi
79
Abū'l-Qāsim Aḥmad b. Muḥammad 186
Abū'l-Qāsim b. Aḥmad b. Ḥāshim 278
Abū'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī 69
Abū'l-Qāsim al-Iskandarānī 63
Abū'l-Qāsim Saʿd Allāh 254
Abū Rās al-Nāṣirī 252, 253
Abū Rāshid Saʿid b. Muḥammad al-
Naysābūrī 78, 80, 81
Abū Saʿd Bishr b. al-Ḥusayn al-Dāwūdī
80
Abū Saʿid b. al-Aʿrābī 177, 179
Abū Saʿid, ḷ-khān 37
Abū Salīm, Muḥammad Ibrāhīm 270,
275, 276, 280, 281
Abū'l-Shāmāt, Maḥmūd 38, 295
Abū'l-Shaykh 29
Abū Shuʿayb al-Nāsik 69
Abū'l-Suʿūd Efendi 609, 610, 611
Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī 29, 31, 49, 50, 51,
56, 59, 60, 62, 68, 427
Abū'l-Ṭayyib b. Harthama 82
Abū Tujin 251
Abū Turāb al-Nakhshabī 75
Abū ʿUthmān al-Saʿid al-Tilimsānī 255
Abū Wahb ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAbbāsī
al-Zāhid 176, 178, 190, 194
Abū Yaʿazza 248
Abū Yahyā Zakariyāʾ al-Sājī 60
Abū Yazīd al-Bastāmī (al-Bistāmī) 11,
54, 118, 129, 130, 416, 419, 425, 426,
427, 428, 432, 433, 616, 617, 619,
620, 621, 622
Abū Yūsuf al-Marīnī 215
Abu-Manneh, Butrus 38, 461
Abubakar, Aliyu 357, 362, 376, 377
Abubakar, Aminu d-Dīn 338, 376
Abulung, Haji ʿAbd al-Ḥamid 20, 685
Abun-Nasr, Jamil 165, 168, 169, 210,
329, 335, 362, 363, 364, 365, 375
Adam 65, 104, 380
Ādam b. M. Shāʾib al-Barnāwī 720
Adam, Maulana Ibrahim (Molvi
Ebrahim) 393, 401, 402
Adams, C.C. 313
Addas, Claude 98, 117, 178, 184, 187,
188, 189, 193, 194, 196, 228
ʿAdī b. Musāfir 151
ʿAḍud al-Dawla 78, 79, 80, 82
al-ʿAdwānī 258
al-Afghānī, Jamāl al-Dīn 268, 314, 597,
630, 631, 637
ʿAfif al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh b. Asʿad al-
Yāfiʿī —> al-Yāfiʿī
Afifi, A.E. 188
ʿAfifi, Abū'l-ʿAlā 93
Agaev, M. 529
Aguadé, J. 175
Agui 574
Agung 672, 689
al-Aḥdab 80, 81
al-Ahdal 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110,
111, 112, 113, 115, 116, 117, 118, 243
Aḥmad ʿAliwa 94
Aḥmad al-Azhari 277, 280
Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh Maʿn al-Andalusī
169
Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Khaṭīb al-
Minankabawī 712
Aḥmad b. Abī'l-Ḥawārī 73
Aḥmad b. Aḥmad 325
Aḥmad b. ʿAlwān 143
Aḥmad b. Amir b. al-Nāṣir al-Ḥasanī al-
Jilānī 131
Aḥmad b. ʿĀmir al-Ṭāʾī 64
Aḥmad b. ʿĀshir al-Anṣārī 220
Aḥmad b. Bābā al-Shinqīṭī 720
Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal 4, 26, 28, 29, 71, 72,
73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 482
Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Muʾayyad
bi'llāh 125
Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Qashtālī 212
Aḥmad b. Idris 9, 10, 43, 147, 165, 166,
169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 275, 741, 749
Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Adamī, Abū'l-
ʿAbbās 56
Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Sālim al-Baṣrī,
Abū'l-Ḥasan 62, 179
Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Madāʾinī 83
Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Najrī al-
Nassākh 132
Aḥmad b. Mulūka al-Nadhrūmī 254
Aḥmad b. Naṣr al-Dhārī 63
Aḥmad b. al-Qādī 252
Aḥmad b. Yūsuf 252
Aḥmad Bābā al-Timbukṭī 220
Aḥmad al-Badawī 151, 229

- Aḥmad Barēlwī, Sayyid 12, 13, 452, 453,
 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460,
 461, 462, 465, 466, 467
 Ahmad bin Muḥammad Saʿid 755
 Ahmad bin Muḥammad Zain al-Patani
 (al-Fathani) 743, 744, 745, 748, 749,
 751, 753
 Aḥmad, Fayḍ 482
 Aḥmad Ibrāhīm 376
 Aḥmad al-Judhāmī al-Fāsī 220
 Aḥmad al-Kabīr 252
 Aḥmad Khan 460, 461
 Ahmad Khan, Muin-ud-Din 453
 Ahmad Khatib Sambas (Aḥmad b. ʿAbd
 al-Ghaffār al-Khaṭīb al-Sambasī) 20,
 709, 710, 712, 713, 714, 715, 724,
 742, 750, 754
 Aḥmad al-Maqrizī 230
 Ahmad, Mohiuddin 453, 466
 Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Ḍubayb 147
 Aḥmad al-Muqrānī 258
 Ahmad, Qadi Moinuddin 417
 Ahmad, Qeyamuddin 459, 461, 464
 Aḥmad Riḍā Khān Barēlwī 471, 472,
 473, 476, 477
 Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī 283, 293, 305, 308
 Aḥmad al-Sharjī 106
 Aḥmad, Sultan 669
 Aḥmad al-Ṭayyib w. al-Bashīr 269, 270,
 272, 275
 Aḥmad al-Tijānī 10, 165, 166, 168, 169,
 171, 330, 331, 334, 335, 336, 364,
 365, 366, 367, 368, 371, 374, 375,
 376, 379, 380, 381, 721, 727
 Aḥmad w. Saʿd 279
 Aḥmad w. Sulaymān 279
 Aḥmad Yasawī (Ahmed-i Yesevī) 532,
 538, 605
 Aḥmad al-Zawāwī 167
 Ahmed, A. F. 357, 361
 Ahmed, Akbar S. 532
 Aḥmed Kemāl 550
 Ahmed Khan Qadari, Maulana 394
 Ahmeti, Šerif 658, 659
 Aḥrār, ʿUbaydullāh 37, 495, 498
 Aḥsāʾī, Aḥmad-i 628
 ʿĀʾisa b. Muḥammad 258
 ʿAjāmī, Fakhr al-Dīn-i 606
 Akbar 11, 423, 424, 429, 437, 438, 439,
 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446,
 447, 448, 450, 451
 Akhmedov, N. 526, 527
 Ākhundzāda, Faṭḥʿalī-i 630, 637
 ʿĀkiš al-Ḍamaḍī, Ḥasan b. Aḥmad 170,
 171
 Akimushkin, O.F. 497
 Āl Qamr, Muḥyīʾl-Dīn 308
 Āl Qamr, Muṣṭafa 308
 ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn 545
 ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Riʿāyat Shāh 666, 669
 Aladdin, B. 98, 107, 110, 114, 120
 Alāʾī 440
 Alain de Lille 104
 Alam, Muzaffar 454
 al-ʿAlamī, Ḥusayn Muḥammad b.
 ʿUthmān 364
 ʿAlamuʾllāh 453
 al-ʿAlawī, al-Ḥājī ʿAbd Allāh 375
 ʿAlawī, Wajih al-Dīn 417, 421, 422, 423,
 426, 427, 430
 al-Aleemi al-Qadiri, al-Haj Muhammad
 Jaʿfar Sheikh 390
 Alfā Ḥashim 720, 721
 Alfa, Karamokho 325
 Algar, Hamid 30, 51, 288, 289, 502, 537,
 559, 604
 ʿAlī al-ʿĀbid 260
 ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh 363
 ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Abīʾl-Khayr al-
 Šāyidi (al-Šāʾidi) 6, 132, 133, 132,
 133
 ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṭawāshī 129
 ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṭayyib 720, 721
 ʿAlī b. Abī Ghānim 252
 ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib 2, 125, 129, 132, 151,
 360, 393, 454, 480, 715
 ʿAlī b. ʿĪsā 54
 ʿAlī b. Jahḍam, Abūʾl-Ḥasan 73
 ʿAlī b. Khashram 71
 ʿAlī b. Mahdī al-Raqqī 64
 ʿAlī b. Maymūn 110, 111
 ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ghaznawī 127
 ʿAlī b. Mujaththal 171
 ʿAlī b. al-Muwaffaq 74
 ʿAlī b. Yūsuf b. Tāshufin 186
 ʿAlī al-Batanūnī 98
 ʿAlī Bāwardī (= Rāmīṭānī) 498
 ʿAlī, grandfather of the Khalifa
 ʿAbdullāhī 272
 ʿAlī al-Hādī 614, 618
 ʿAlī Ḥamad Barakāt 277
 ʿAlī Hamadānī 495

- °Ali al-Jabartī 138
 °Ali Kiyā b. Amīr Kiyā al-Malāṭī 127
 °Ali al-Muttaqī 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 427, 431
 Ali Paša 642
 °Ali Pacha, al-Ḥājī 296
 °Ali al-Riḍā 63, 64, 284
 °Ali Shēr Bangālī 419, 420
 Ali, Shahamat (°Ali, Shahamat) 461, 479
 °Ali Shīr Nawā'ī 548
 °Ali Zayn al-°Ābidīn 126
 °Ali-i Aqsarāyī 611
 Alikalfić, Fazlija 652
 al-°Allāf, °Abd al-Karīm 295
 °Allām, °Ali °Abd al-Fattāḥ 321
 °Allāma al-Ḥillī 284, 289
 Allworth, Edward 521, 522
 Alpaeu, O. 529
 Althusser 436
 al-Ālūsī, °Abd al-Ḥamīd 304
 al-Ālūsī, Abū'l-Thanā' 293, 294, 295, 304
 al-Ālūsī, Maḥmūd 580
 al-Ālūsī, Maḥmūd Shukrī 293, 297, 304, 305, 306
 al-Ālūsī, Nu°mān 304
 al-A°mash 194
 al-Amīn 68
 Amīn, Aḥmad 658
 Amīn, Muḥammad M. 238, 239, 240
 Amīn, P.J. 313
 Amīn, Qāsim 314
 °Āmir, °Abd al-Ḥakīm 319, 320
 °Āmir b. Qays 75
 Amīr Khān 454
 Amīr Kulāl, Sayyid 497, 517
 Among Raga 672
 °Amr b. al-Layth 78
 Amritsarī, Mawlawī Thanā°ullāh 476
 Amselle, Jean-Loup 337
 Āmulī, Ḥaydar-i 619, 620, 621
 Anawati, G. 49
 Anbethvi, Khalil Ahmed 404
 Anderson, B.R. 694, 716
 Anderson, R.O'G. 733
 Andrae, Tor 485
 Angenendt, Arnold 152
 Anšārī —> °Abd Allāh-i Anšārī
 Ansari, Muḥammad Abdul Haq 97, 232, 233, 234
 Ansari, Sarah F.D. 759
 al-Anšārī, Zakariyyā 111, 112
 al-°Antarī, Ṣalāḥ 255, 266
 Anuchin, D.N. 522
 Anūshirvān 544
 Anwar, Awwal 357, 378
 Appleby, R.S. 329, 357
 Āqā Khān-i Kirmānī, Mirzā 630, 637
 °Āqil Khān Rāzī 422
 A°rāb, S.A. 212
 Arberry, Arthur J. 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 67
 Arbós, F. 198
 Archinard, Commandant 326
 Ardabili, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad-i 622
 Arié, R. 198, 200, 201
 Arief, A.Mm. 713, 724
 °Ārif Rīwgārī 497
 Aristanbebekov, S. 529
 Arjomand, Said Amir 286
 Arnold, Thomas 470
 al-Arzinjānī, °Abd Allāh 711
 Asad b. Mūsā 485
 Asad, Talal 436, 524
 Asadābādī, Jamāl al-Dīn —> al-Afghānī, Jamāl al-Dīn
 Aşbagh b. Mālik 175, 178
 Aşçı Dede İbrāhīm 38
 al-Ash°arī, Abū'l-Ḥasan 32, 33, 69, 77, 453
 °Āshūqshāzāde 605
 Ashraf 106
 Ashrafi, Peer Bashullah Shah 390
 Ashtiyani, Julia 87
 Asín Palacios, M. 35, 174, 176, 184, 186, 196
 Asj°ari, Hasjim 719
 Askari, Syed Hasan 416
 al-Asyūṭī, Muḥammad 240
 Ata, Sayyid 499, 532
 Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal 42, 718
 al-Athari, Muḥammad Bahjat 295, 297, 304, 305, 306
 °Atīq, Abū Bakr 373
 °Atīq b. °Isā b. Aḥmad al-Khazrajī 188
 °Aṭīya, Ghassān 298, 300, 301
 Atkin, Muriel 527, 537
 °Aṭṭār, Farīd al-Dīn 46, 48, 56, 422, 427
 al-°Aṭṭār, Ḥasan 172
 Attas, S.M.N. 670, 673, 674
 Aubin, Françoise 560, 600
 Austin, R.W.J. 35, 174

- Awang, Fauzi bin Haji 741, 744
 °Awn, Kamāl Aḥmad 95, 96, 121
 Awrangzib 430, 431
 al-Awsī 118
 al-°Aydārūs 149
 al-°Aydārūsī, Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad b.
 °Ali b. Ḥasanjī al-Ḥumaydī 674
 al-Aykī 110
 °Ayn al-Qudāt-i Hamadhānī 32, 427
 al-°Azāmī, Salāma 316
 Azamov, Saidherim 530
 Azizkhan Tura Abdalnabi 536
 Azmeh, A. 213
 Azra, Azyumardi 19, 670, 675, 676, 677,
 678, 679, 681, 683, 684, 706, 707
 Azuar, R. 183
 Āzurda, Ṣadr al-Dīn 465
 al-°Azzāwī, °Abbās 291, 294, 295, 287,
 298, 304, 306
- b. Maḥmūd, Aḥmad 243
 Bâ, Amadou Hampaté 334
 Ba, Ceerno Muhammad Sayyid 353, 354
 Bâ Shaybān 675
 Baal, Ceerno Suleymān 325
 Bābā °Arūj 254
 Bābā Faṭḥ Muḥammad Muḥaddith 429
 Baba Ilyās-i Khorasānī 604
 Baba Ishāq 604
 Babadzanov, Baxtiyor 527, 537
 Babakhanov, Ziauddin 526, 527, 537,
 539
 Babayan, Kathryn 622
 Babinger, Franz 607
 Bābur Pādshāh Ghāzī, Ṣāḥiru'd-din
 Muḥammad 418, 444
 Bacon, Elizabeth 521
 Baczkowski, Włodzimierz 521
 Badā°ūnī (Badā°ōnī), °Abd al-Qādir
 421, 422, 423, 424, 438, 440, 446,
 447, 448, 449, 450, 476
 Bādīsī, °Abd al-Ḥaqq 216
 Badr al-Dīn Maydānī 499
 Badsha Peer, Hazrat Soofie Sahib 394,
 401, 404
 Badshah Pir, Ahmad 391, 396
 Baer, Gabriel 17
 al-Baghdādī, Khālīd 306
 Bahā° al-Dīn Anṣārī 434
 Bahā° al-Dīn Shāh Bājan 425
 Bahā° ul-Ḥaqq Zakariyyā 470
- Bahādur Shāh 422
 Bahlūl —> P'hūl
 Bai Shouyi 553
 al-Bakawī, Muḥammad al-Bashīr b.
 Muḥammad 385
 al-Bakr, Aḥmad Ḥasan 308
 Bakr b. Ukht °Abd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd 68
 al-Bakrī, °Abd al-Ḥamid 317
 al-Bakrī, Aḥmad Murād 317
 al-Bakrī, Muḥammad 334
 al-Bakrī, Muḥammad Tawfiq 310, 311,
 312, 316, 317
 al-Bakrī, Nūr al-Dīn 108
 Bakrī Shaykh Amin 156
 al-Balafiqī, Abū'l-Barakāt 198, 202
 Baldick, Julian 34, 36, 176, 179, 195, 197
 Balivet, Michel 605
 Baljon, J.M.S. 465
 Ballhatchet, K. 522
 Balthasar, Urs von 102
 al-Balyānī, Awḥad al-Dīn 100, 101, 104
 Bamba, Aḥmadu (Aḥmadou) 332, 339,
 348, 351, 352
 al-Banjari, Muhammad Arshad 685, 735
 Baqī b. Makhlad 180
 al-Bāqillānī 33, 77
 al-Bāqūrī, Ḥasan 319
 al-Barādhi°ī 214
 Barber, C.R. 229
 Barberousse, Kayr al-Dīn 253, 254, 255
 Baried, Baroroh 673
 al-Barjī, Abū'l-Ḥasan 186, 187, 193
 al-Barnāwī al-Ghazarghāmī, °Abd al-
 Salām b. Ḥusayn b. Ḥamdūn 385
 Barqūq al-Nāṣiri 225, 246
 Barrāda al-Maghribī al-Fāsī, °Alī
 Ḥarāzim b. al-°Arabī 168, 334, 363,
 364, 375
 Barrett, Thomas M. 535
 Barrionuevo, L. Cara 203
 Bars Bāy 110, 225, 238
 Bartol'd, W. 497
 Bashīr, Shaykh 369
 Bashirov, L.A. 526
 Basilov, V.N. 532
 Basset, René 522
 Bassin, Mark 522
 al-Bastāmī —> Abū Yazīd al-Bastāmī
 (al-Bistāmī)
 Batatu, Hanna 292, 295, 296, 297, 298,
 307, 308

- Batran, A.A. 361
 Batunsky, Mark 521
 Bayat, Mangol 16, 632
 Bāyazīd the Afghan 418
 Baybars II 111
 Baybars al-Jāshnikīr 233
 al-Bayḍāwī 483, 488
 Bayero, Alhaji Abdullahi 368
 Bāyezīd II 606
 Bayley, Edward Clive 423
 Bayrām Khān 423, 424, 446
 Bayramoğlu 606
 al-Bayṭār, ʿAbd al-Razzāq 683
 Baytur, Ānwār 549
 Beaumont, Daniel 225
 Becker, Seymour 521, 523
 Bedr el-Dīn 15, 605, 606
 Beg, M.H.A. 424
 Behardien, Ahmad 389, 398
 Behrendt, T.E. 688
 Behrens-Abouseif, Doris 225, 242
 Behrman, L.C. 343, 345
 Bel, A. 184, 194, 210, 251
 Bell, Joseph N. 192
 Bello, ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad 381, 382, 385
 Bello, Alhaji Sir Aḥmadu 329, 373
 Ben Hammadi, A. 184
 Bencheikroun, Mohamed B.A. 212, 213, 214, 215, 216
 Bennigsen, Alexandre 520, 524, 526, 527, 528, 529, 532, 534
 Berberović, Nezir 643, 645
 Berbrugger, Adréan 257
 Berelowitch, Wladimir 522
 Berkey, Jonathan 231, 237, 238, 239, 242
 Berque, Jacques 249
 Beveridge, Annette S. 418, 424
 Beveridge, H. 441, 442
 Bhutto, Benazir 472
 Bībī (Būbū) Rāstī 428
 al-Biblāwī, Muḥammad ʿAlī 315
 al-Bicawī, Ḥamza b. ʿAbd al-Qādir 385
 Bihbahānī, Waḥīd 287, 288, 289
 Bihbihānī, Āqā Muḥammad ʿAlī-i 622, 623, 627
 Biller, P. 202
 al-Biqāʿī, Ibrāhīm 7, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 122, 235, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247
 Birge, J. Kingsley 604
 Birgili, Birkawī, Birgivi Mehmed Efendi 15, 172, 579, 580, 604, 608, 610
 al-Bisāṭī, Muḥammad 110, 113
 Bishr b. al-Ḥārith al-Ḥāfi 4, 29, 48, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 79, 81, 125
 Bishr b. al-Ḥusayn 79
 Bishr b. al-Muʿtamir, Abū Sahl 68, 69
 Bishr, the Qadi 90
 Bistrigi, Šejh 644
 Bjørkelo, Anders 272, 280
 Blank, Stephen 522
 Blochmann, H. 440
 Boase, T.S.R. 240
 Böwering, Gerhard 3, 28, 53, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 178, 179
 Bohr, Annette 539
 Bond, George D. 229
 Bosch Vilá, J. 199
 Bosworth, Clifford E. 157
 Botha, P.W. 408
 Bottéro, Jean 541, 543
 Boulifa, Amar 255
 Bourdieu, P. 205
 Bousfield, John 755
 Boyd, Jean 361
 Braudel, Fernand 250
 Brenner, Louis 274, 373, 383
 Brill Olcott, Martha 535
 Brower, Daniel 521
 Brown, C.C. 669
 Brown, E.G. 636
 Brown, Kenneth 328
 Brown, Peter 38
 Broxup, Marie 529, 533, 538
 Buehler, Arthur 12, 397, 456, 458, 476, 477, 483
 al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl 463, 481
 al-Bukhārī, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn 110, 113, 115, 119
 Bukhārī, Ṣalāh b. Mubārak 506
 Bulliet, R. 196
 al-Bulqīnī, Sirāj al-Dīn 110, 113
 al-Būnī, Muḥammad 259, 261
 Būnyāmin-i Ayāshī 611
 al-Burashkī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān 215
 al-Burashkī, Abū Mūsā ʿĪsā 215
 Burckhardt, Johann Ludwig 153, 158, 159

- al-Burhānpūrī, Muḥammad b. Faḍl Allah
667, 668, 678, 738
- Burke III, E. 39
- Buronov, Devran 530
- Burridge, K. 413
- Burton, Richard F. 23, 24
- Busse, Heribert 77, 79, 149
- Cabanelas, D. 186
- Cahen, Claude 604
- Calder, Norman 233
- Calero Secall, M.I. 199, 200
- Canfield, Robert 536
- Cardaire, M. 344
- Castag , Joseph 532
- Catherine II 521, 523
- Cehaji , D . 656
-  erimovi , Mehmed Ali 647, 648
- Chabbi, J. 176
- Chamberlin, J.W. 368
- Chang Chengzi 543
- Charles Quint 258
- Charouiti Hasnaoui, M. 200
- Chaumont, E. 197
- Chen, D. 578, 581
- Chen Keli 591, 592
- Cherif-Chebbi, Le la 14
- Chinghiz Khan 439
- Chittick, William 121, 228
- Chodkiewicz, Cyrille 101
- Chodkiewicz, Michel 7, 35, 103, 171,
195, 197, 208, 229, 268, 275, 460, 465
- Cilliers, J.L. 389, 393, 397
- Clapperton, Hugh 371
- Clayer, Nathalie 18, 523, 660
- Cole, R. Juan 287, 289
- Collin, Jean 350
- Colvin, John Russell 457
- Cook, Michael 148, 157
- Coppolani 39
- Corbin, Henri 31, 124, 284, 286, 287,
288, 289, 619
- Cornell, Vincent 5, 21, 188, 248
- Corteseo, Armando 666
- Coulon, Christian 327, 343
- Cour, Auguste 251
- Cox, Sir Percy 302
- Craayenstein, Ridwaan 409
- Cruise O'Brien, D.B. 343
- Da Costa, Yusuf 386, 387, 388, 389, 398,
402, 414
- Da, Y. 585
- al-Dabb gh,  Abd al- Az z 10, 166, 167,
168, 169
- Daf  All h Baqaw  275
- Dahl n,  Abd All h b.  adaqa 721
- Dahl n, Abdul Aziz 673
- Dahl n, A mad Zayn  158, 268, 273,
721, 728
- Dallas, Ian (Abdul Qadir al-Murabit al-
Sufi al-Darqaw ) 396
- Dan, P re 257
- Danaqsh 78, 79
- al-Danaqsh , Ab   al b  Abd al- Az z
78, 79
- al-Dandar w  (Danduri), Mu ammad b.
A mad 743, 745, 749
- Dangor, S. 388
- D n shpazh h, M.T. 621
- D niy l 442
- Danner, Victor 237
- al-Daqq q, Ab   Ali 51
- D r  Shik h 430
- D r b Kh n 428
- al-D r n , Ab  Sulayman 54, 125, 126
- al-D raqutn  63
- Darr, M. Ashraf 479
- Darwin, Ch. 632
- Darwish, M s  b. Sulaym n 93
- Datuk, Muhammad Said Tan Sri 746
- D   d b. Sulaym n b. Jirjis al-Baghd di
147
- D   d b. Sulaym n al-Jurj n  64
- D   d b. Sulaym n al-Naqshband  al-
Kh lidi 149
- D   d Ch  i 449
- D   d al-Fat n  (Daud Abdullah Patani)
    al-Fat n 
- Daudi, Ahmad 675
- David 65
- Davids, Achmat 386, 387, 388, 389, 391,
395, 396, 398, 402, 414
- Daw n ,  Ali 623
- D w d, A mad 302
- D w d b. Mu ammad al-Jil n  134
- D w d al-   i 125
- al-Daylam ,  Ali 77, 78, 80, 82
- Deedat, A mad 596

- De Jong, Frederick 9, 17, 18, 42, 143,
146, 153, 167, 176, 307, 311, 315,
317, 318, 320, 604
de Jonge, Huub 728
Deladrière 51
Delval, Raymond 339
Delvoye, F. Nalini 454
Demerseman, A. 184
Demidov, S.M. 526, 530, 531, 532, 533
Demko, George J. 521
Denham, F.R.S. 371
Denny, Frederick M. 229
Depont 39
Desai, Maulana A.S. 396
DeWeese, Devin 13, 36, 525, 526, 528,
532
al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn 28, 48, 55, 56,
63, 64, 70, 72, 73, 74, 76, 98, 110,
113, 151
Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī 3, 50, 57, 70, 76, 77,
118, 125, 126, 177, 178, 380, 617
Dia, Mamadou 329, 344, 345, 348
Diakhou, Maba 325, 326
Dietrich, Albert 559
Digby, S. 444
al-Dihlawī, 'Abdulḥaq 486, 488
Dihlāwī, Mirzā Ḥayrāt 455
al-Dijwī, Yūsuf 315
al-Dimashqī al-Khalwatī, Ayyūb b.
Aḥmad b. Ayyūb 681
Ding Henian 553
Diouf, Abdou 349, 355, 356
Diouf, M.H. 343, 344, 346,
Dixon, Richard 527
Djidjić, Fuad 656
Djozo, Husejin 657, 658
Dobbin, Christine 700
Doev, A. 529
Dols, Michael W. 226, 238, 240, 242
Donaldson, D.M. 286
Douglas, E.H. 186
Doukouré, Dahiru 348
Doutté, Edmond 707
Dozy, R. 186
Drague, Georges 39
Dramé, Muhammad Lamin 351
Dreher, J. 188, 189
Drewes, G.W.J. 693, 697, 698, 699, 708
Drimba, Vladimir 542
Du Wenxiu 568
Dubant, B. 176
Dūdū Miyān 453
Dughlat, Mirza Haydar 545
Durdyeva, Ia.K. 526
al-Durūbī, Ibrāhīm 296
Duveyrier 39
Düzdağ, Ertuğrul 609
Džemali, Šejh 654, 655, 656, 663
Eaton, Richard M. 416, 430, 470, 525
Ebied, R.Y. 648
Eckhart, Maître 96
Effendi, Djohan 723, 726
Eickelman, Dale 524, 530, 536, 539
Elias, N. 545
Enayat, Hamid 287
Ende, Werner 38, 145, 146, 320
Ernst, Carl W. 11, 103, 226, 606, 621
Eshak, Yousuf Ismail 396
Eshaq, Maulana Abdul Hamid 398
Eşref, Edhem 640
Ewing, Katherine P. 458
al-Fadānī, Muḥammad Yāsīn b.
Muḥammad 'Isā 710
Faḍl Allāh Shaṭṭārī 417, 418, 419, 420,
421, 423, 426
Faḍl al-Ḥadāthī 69, 70
Fadl al-Rahman al-Ansari al-Qadiri,
Maulana 390
Fagnan, E. 186
Fairbank, John K. 559, 569
Fakhr ad-Dīn 'Alī b. Ḥusayn 498
Fall, M. 356
Fanjul, S. 198
al-Fansūrī, Ḥamza 19, 672, 673, 674,
676, 677, 682
al-Fārābī, Abū Naṣr 624
al-Farghānī 110, 116
Farḥī 429
Farīdī, Nasīm Aḥmad 456
Fāris 616
al-Fārmadī, Abū 'Alī 715
Faroghī, Suraiya 604
Fārūq, king of Egypt 317
Fārūqī, Abū'l-Ḥasan Zayd 458, 474
al-Fatānī, Dāwūd b. 'Abd Allāh 19, 684,
685, 739
Faṭḥ b. Shakhrāf 73
Faṭḥ al-Mawṣilī 75
Faṭḥ Muḥammad 429
Fāṭima 393, 454

- Fayḍī 450
 Fayḍī, Sulaymān 297, 305
 Fayṣal, le roi de l'Irak 302, 303, 307
 al-Fazārī 198
 al-Fazārī, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh
 b. Aḥmad 78
 al-Fāzārī, Ibrāhīm 212
 Fa'far 389
 Fehmī, Shaykh 38
 Feng, J. 581, 582
 Feng Zenglie 554
 Féraud, Charles 254, 264, 265
 Ferhat, H. 194
 Fernandes, Leonor 230, 237, 238, 239,
 240, 241, 242
 Fernea, Elizabeth 290
 Fierro, Maribel 4, 175, 176, 177, 178,
 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185,
 186, 188, 191, 194, 195, 197, 198,
 202, 208, 214
 Fikri, Sejh 642
 Filali, Kamel 5
 al-Fiḳī, Muḥammad Ḥāmid 240, 321
 Firʿawn 102, 107, 113
 Firth, Raymond 744
 al-Firūzābādī 117
 Fisher, Alan W. 521, 523
 al-Fishtālī, Abū Muḥammad 195, 215,
 220, 221
 Flemming, Barbara 151, 152
 Fletcher, Joseph 554, 556, 559
 Fočak, Abdulah 655
 Forsyth, Sir T.D. 546
 Foucault, M. 209
 Friedmann, Y. 177, 433
 Froelich, Claude 328, 337
 Fuḍayl b. ʿIyāḍ 48, 75, 125
 Fukang'an 566
 Furūzānfar, Badīʿ al-zamān 481, 489
 Fufeld, Warren 457, 458, 464

 Gabier, Omar 398
 Gabisov, B.G. 526
 Gaborieau, Marc 12, 454, 457, 458, 459,
 460, 461, 464, 465, 467, 479, 502,
 548, 560, 600, 697
 Gabriel 63
 Gadāʿī 423, 424
 Galadanci, S.A.S 372, 384
 Galdan 559
 Galdan Tsering 542

 Gana, Ibrahim Muḥammad 330
 Ganga 480
 Gangohi, Rashid Ahmed 404
 Ganj-i Shakār, Farīd al-Dīn 444, 445
 Gao Wenyuan 570
 Gao, Z. 581, 594, 598
 García-Arenal, M. 193, 203
 Gardet, Louis 49, 50, 56
 Gatoloco 694
 Gazi Husrevbeg 642, 643, 644, 645
 Geertz, Clifford 707
 Gellner, Ernest 325, 328, 533
 Geoffroy, Eric 35, 112, 115, 167
 Geraci, Robert 522
 Geyer, Dietrich 521
 Ghādī, Muḥammad 614
 Ghālib b. Sīd Būna 199
 Ghawthī, Muḥammad Mandawī 417,
 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 425, 427, 428
 al-Ghazzālī (al-Ghazālī), Abū Ḥāmid
 Muḥammad b. Muḥammad 6, 25, 34,
 45, 49, 50, 51, 112, 114, 127, 128,
 129, 130, 133, 136, 174, 184, 185,
 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 192, 193,
 194, 195, 196, 197, 214, 215, 221,
 222, 250, 283, 427, 482, 484, 491,
 671, 682, 683, 717
 Ghijduwānī, ʿAbd al-Khāliq 496, 497,
 499, 501, 502, 504, 505, 506, 507,
 512, 517
 Ghrāb, S. 186, 191
 al-Ghubrīnī, Abū'l-ʿAbbas 251
 Ghulām ʿAlī Āzād Bilgrāmi 433
 Ghulām Khalīl, Abū ʿAbdallāh Aḥmad
 b. Muḥammad b. Ghālib al-Bāhili al-
 Baṣrī 3, 26, 27, 28, 55
 Ghulām Muṣṭafā Efendi, Shāh 392
 Ghulām Sarwar Lāhawri 426
 Gibb, H.A.R. 312, 314
 Gijduvonii 538, see also Ghijduwānī,
 ʿAbd al-Khāliq
 Gilsenan, Michael 312, 524
 Gladney, Dru 536
 Gloton, M. 50
 Goldhagen, Erich 522
 Goldziher, Ignaz 151, 229
 Gong Zizhen 543
 Goodrich, D.R. 188, 189
 Gottschalk, H.L. 387

- Gramlich, Richard 26, 29, 30, 49, 50, 51,
52, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 68, 81, 91, 163,
287, 620
- Gramsci, A. 202
- Grandin, Nicole 9, 467
- Granja, F. de la 212
- Green, William Scott 225
- Grégoire de Nazianze 102
- Grégoire de Nysse 102, 105
- Grenard, F. 546
- Greyling, C.J.A. 387, 391, 397, 412
- Gribetz, A. 191
- Gril, Denis 103, 107, 109
- Groot, J.J.M. de 557
- Gross, Jo-Ann 13, 40, 537
- Gräf, Erich 228
- Guan Lianji 570
- Guichard, P. 182, 192, 196
- Guldin, Gregory Eliyu 523
- Gullick, J.M. 746
- Gumi, Abubakar Mahmud 329, 333, 338,
341, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 377,
378, 381
- Gümüşkhanewî, Diyâ' al-Dîn 38
- Gölpınarlı 609, 612
- Ha Decheng 590
- Habermas, Jürgen 209, 218
- Ḥabīb °Ali Shāh 392
- Ḥabīb Allāh Muftî 13, 548, 549
- Habib al-Sagaf 702, 703
- Habibi, Nascem Ashraf 401
- Habibi, Shāh Ghulām Muḥammad 391,
396
- Habibullah, Maulana 391
- Ḥabībẓāde 550
- al-Ḥabshī (al-Ḥibshī), °Abd Allāh
Muḥammad 105, 106, 127, 128, 129,
130, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138,
143, 144
- Hadżibajrić, Fejzulah 654, 655, 656,
657, 659
- Haddad, Yvonne 229
- Haddawy, H. 25
- al-Hadhabānī, Šadr al-Dîn 231
- Hādī °Izz al-Dîn b. al-Ḥasan al-
Yahyawî 136
- al-Ḥaḍramī, al-Sayyid 128
- al-Ḥaffār 204
- Ḥāfiẓ 546, 635
- Hafiz Hamdi Efendija 643
- Haghayeghi, Mehrdad 539
- Hai Rui 553
- Hai, Z. 592
- Haig, Wolseley 421
- Haji Jalaluddin 722, 723, 724, 725, 726
- Haji Rasul 715, 716
- Haji Yahya bin Laksemana 714
- al-Ḥājj al-°Abbās b. Šālīḥ 212
- al-Ḥājj °Umar Tall b. Sa°id al-Fūti 165,
166, 325, 326, 351, 362, 363, 364,
366, 721
- Ḥājji Bayrām-ı Veli 604, 606
- Ḥājji Khalifa 114
- Ḥājji Pādishāh 548
- Ḥājji Shari°at Allāh 453
- al-Ḥakam II 184
- al-Ḥakim 225
- al-Ḥakim al-Tirmidhī 32, 34, 58, 103,
120, 164, 171
- Halff, B. 196
- Halidi, Jusuf 685
- al-Ḥallāj, al-Ḥusayn b. Manšūr 19, 30,
32, 33, 56, 59, 84, 85, 89, 90, 91, 99,
164, 191, 199, 283, 381, 417, 422,
428, 506, 614, 616, 618, 620, 621,
622, 635, 672, 708
- Hallaq, Wael B. 230
- Ḥamad al-Naḥlān 273
- Hamada, Masami 13, 548
- al-Ḥamawī, Muṣṭafā Faṭḥ Allāh 667
- Hamid ad-Din Suwali Nagori 447
- Ḥāmid b. al-°Abbās 56
- Ḥāmid Lār 423
- Ḥāmid Muḥammad Sulfāb 276
- Hamka 715, 723, 728
- Hammadi, A. 192, 193
- al-Ḥammāmī, Muṣṭafā Abū al-Sayf 316
- Ḥamūya, Sa°d al-Dîn 619
- Ḥamza, °Abd al-Laṭif 225, 226, 230, 231
- Ḥamza b. Ḥasan 263
- Ḥamza Bālī 609, 611
- Ḥamza al-Fansūrī → al-Fansūrī
- Hamzah, Abu Bakar 749
- Han Erge (Han Second) 562, 563, 564
- Han Hajji 558, 560, 561, 563, 572
- Han Hashao 560
- Han Si 570, 571
- Han Wu 561, 572
- Handžić, H.M. Akif 646
- Handžić, Mehmed 648, 649, 650, 655,
658, 662, 663

- Hann (Han) Nuri 570, 571
 Haq, M.M. 416, 425
 Haroon, Abdullah 408, 409
 Hart, David M. 532
 Hartmann, Martin 541, 546
 Hartmann, Richard 49
 Hārūn al-Rashīd 23, 27, 68
 Ḥasan al-ʿAbbādī 278
 Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Jalāl 135
 Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib 393, 465
 Ḥasan b. ʿAlī al-Jadr 138
 Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Jurmūzī 139
 Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Awṭānī 134
 Ḥasan b. Salmān 131, 132
 Ḥasan al-Bannāʾ 407
 al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī 2, 27, 68, 92, 283, 618
 Hasan de Prizren, Šejh 653
 Ḥasan al-Dimyāṭī 194
 Ḥasan Jān 12, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 487, 488
 Ḥasan al-Majīd 308
 Hasan Maulani, Kiyahi 697, 698
 Ḥasan Pasha 139
 Ḥasan, Sulṭān 225
 al-Ḥasanī, ʿAbd al-Ḥayy b. Fakhr al-Dīn 674
 Ḥassān 258
 Hassan, Hamdan 741, 742, 744
 Hawting, G.R. 233
 Ḥayātū b. Saʿīd 275
 Ḥaydar-i ʿAmulī 15, 16, 96, 284
 al-Ḥaydarī, Ibrāhīm Faṣīḥ 306
 Hazard, Harry W. 521
 Hedayatullah, Muhammad 457
 Hein, Norvin 439
 Helwing, C.M.S. 682
 Hemaluhu 560, 561, 562, 572
 Hendricks, Muhammad Salih 389
 Hermes 57
 Hidāyat Allāh (Khoja Āfāq) 554, 556, 559
 Hidayatullah 719
 Hill, A.H. 668
 Ḥilmī, Muṣṭafā 1
 Ḥilmī al-Qādirī, Ibrāhīm 316
 al-Ḥimṣī, Muḥammad Ḥasan 240
 Hirtenstein, S. 243
 Hiskett, Mervyn 69, 324, 330, 367, 368
 Hitti, Philipp 414
 Hodgson, M.G.S. 51
 Hoffman-Ladd, Valerie 95
 Hofheinz, Albrecht 267, 270
 Hogga, M. 196
 Holle, Karel Frederik 701, 702, 703, 711
 Holt, Clair 733
 Holt, Peter 230, 231, 238, 270, 271, 272, 274, 275, 276, 277, 281, 282
 Homerin, Th. Emil 7, 23, 95, 96, 110, 112, 151, 217, 226, 229, 234, 235, 241, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 493, 494
 Hong Bin 563
 Hooker, M.B. 666, 669, 670, 677
 Hourani, Albert 145, 304, 522
 Hoy, David Couzens 209
 Hu Songshan 585, 586, 590, 592, 593, 597
 Huang Guoqi 566
 Huang Tinggui 555
 al-Huḍaybī, Hasan Ismāʿīl 319
 Hudson, A. 202
 Hughes, T.P. 464
 Ḥujjat Allāh-i Aṣīl 632
 al-Hujwīrī al-Jullābī, ʿAlī 50, 51, 493, 615, 616
 Ḥumayd al-Muḥallī 126
 al-Ḥumaydī, Muḥammad Jaylanī b. Ḥasan Muḥammad 666
 Humāyūn 419, 422, 423, 425, 438, 444, 448
 Humphreys, Stephen R. 231, 238, 239
 Hunczak, Taras 521
 Hunter, William 464
 Hunters, W.W. 474
 Hunwick, John 166, 269, 358, 363, 369, 383
 Ḥusām al-Dīn-i Anqaravī 609, 611
 Ḥusayn, Akhtar 476
 al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib 153, 286, 290, 291, 393, 465
 Ḥusayn le Kurde 286
 Husayn, Muḥammad 474
 Ḥusayn, Nadhīr 474
 Ḥusayn, Šaddām 308
 Ḥusayn w. al-Zahrāʾ 278
 Ḥusayn-i Urmawī, Jalāl al-Dīn 618
 al-Ḥusaynī 130
 al-Ḥusaynī, Ibrāhīm Šālīḥ b. Yūnus 335, 336
 al-Ḥusaynī, Ibrāhīm Šālīḥ b. Yūnus b. Muḥammad al-Awwal 378, 385
 Ḥusaynī Sādāt 425
 al-Ḥuwwārī, Muḥammad 253

Hülāgü 210

Iblīs 78, 94, 684

Ibn ʿAbbād al-Rundī 36, 174, 194, 198

Ibn al-Abbār 187

Ibn ʿAbd al-Salām, ʿIzz al-Dīn 117, 118

Ibn Abī Dūʿād 75

Ibn Abī ʿl-Dunyā 67

Ibn Abī Maṣṣūr 109

Ibn Abī ʿl-Rijāl 132, 137

Ibn Abī ʿl-Ward 75

Ibn Abī Yaʿlā 28

Ibn Abī Zarʿ al-Fāsī, Abū ʿl-Ḥasan ʿAlī 216

Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī, Abū Muḥammad 207, 208, 214

Ibn Aḥlā 198

Ibn ʿAqīl 30, 32

Ibn al-ʿArabī, Ibn ʿArabī, Muḥyi ʿl-Dīn, al-Shaykh al-akbar 7, 15, 31, 34, 35, 36, 66, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 135, 141, 143, 144, 149, 151, 167, 171, 174, 178, 186, 188, 193, 194, 222, 228, 229, 233, 234, 235, 244, 245, 274, 275, 276, 375, 406, 422, 426, 427, 428, 432, 433, 556, 619, 620, 621, 622, 673, 683, 708, 738, 760

Ibn al-ʿArīf, Abū ʿl-ʿAbbās 4, 184, 174, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 196, 250

Ibn ʿAsākir 48, 89

Ibn ʿĀshir 198

Ibn Aswad 188

Ibn ʿAṭāʾ, Aḥmad 29, 56, 58

Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh al-Iskandarī 109, 235, 237

Ibn al-Aṭhīr 230

Ibn ʿAzzāz 149

Ibn Badīs, ʿAbd al-Ḥamid 337

Ibn Badrān al-Dimashqī 71, 73, 75

Ibn Bājja 191

Ibn al-Balkhī 78

Ibn al-Bannāʾ al-Marrākushī 212

Ibn Barraġān, Abū ʿl-Ḥakam 4, 174, 184, 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 196

Ibn Bashkuwāl 177, 187, 194

Ibn Baṭṭūta 198, 499

Ibn Bishr, ʿUṭhman 148, 150, 153, 158

Ibn Dāʿi-i Ḥusaynī-i Rāzī, Murtaḍā 615

Ibn al-Faraḍī 179

Ibn al-Fāriḍ 7, 108, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 141, 144, 149, 151, 228, 229, 233, 235, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247

Ibn al-Farrāʾ 62

Ibn Fūrak 617

Ibn Ghannām 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 154, 155, 158

Ibn Ḥabīb 175

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī 98, 109, 113, 117, 122, 123, 132

Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī 112, 114

Ibn al-Ḥāġib 214

Ibn al-Ḥāġj 198, 202

Ibn al-Ḥāġj al-ʿAbdarī, Muhammad 235, 485, 486

Ibn al-Ḥāġj al-Lūrġī 189

Ibn al-Ḥakkāk 141

Ibn Ḥamdīn, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿAlī 186, 189, 190, 192

Ibn Ḥanbal —> Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal

Ibn Ḥayyān 180

Ibn Ḥazm 91, 182, 184, 185

Ibn Ḥirzihim 186, 193

Ibn Ikshid 80

Ibn Isrāʾīl 100

Ibn al-Jabbāb al-Qurṭubī, Aḥmad b. Khālīd 176, 179

Ibn Jamāʿa, Badr al-Dīn 108

Ibn al-Jawzī 30, 63, 64, 70, 72, 71, 73, 74, 75, 77, 86, 165, 202, 241, 615

Ibn Karrām 34

Ibn Kathīr 54, 151

Ibn Khābiṭ 69, 70

Ibn Khafīf al-Shīrāzī 4, 33, 62, 70, 71, 82, 74, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 88, 89, 90, 91

Ibn Khaldūn 104, 110, 113, 116, 119, 188, 197, 203, 213, 214, 216, 220, 222, 223, 235, 236, 237

Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Lisān al-Dīn 104, 113, 119, 189, 198, 216

Ibn Lubb 202

Ibn al-Maghūfal 254

Ibn Māja 330

Ibn Manda 29

Ibn al-Marʾa 197

Ibn Maryam al-Mallīṭī 252, 254

- Ibn Marzūq al-Tilimsānī, Muḥammad 215, 216
 Ibn Masarra 96, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184
 Ibn Mashīsh 248, 251, 254
 Ibn al-Muʿayyad 138, 143
 Ibn al-Mubārak 194
 Ibn al-Mundhir 188, 189
 Ibn al-Murtaḍā 78, 132, 135, 136
 Ibn al-Muʿtamir 69
 Ibn Muzhir 112
 Ibn Nubāṭa 597
 Ibn al-Qāḍi 255
 Ibn Qasī, Abū'l-Qāsim 4, 174, 184, 186, 187, 188, 189, 191, 196, 197, 206
 Ibn al-Qāsim 194
 Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya 15, 31, 148, 151, 315, 610
 Ibn al-Qiṭṭ 177
 Ibn Qudāma 30, 31, 33, 67
 Ibn al-Raddād, Abū l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad 106, 108, 116
 Ibn Rajab 31
 Ibn Rushayd 216
 Ibn Rushd al-Jadd 191, 194, 201
 Ibn Sabʿīn 99, 100, 101, 104, 113, 116, 119, 197, 207, 232
 Ibn Sahl 201
 Ibn Saḥnūn al-Rāshidi 255
 Ibn al-Sammāk 79
 Ibn Saʿūd (Ibn Saud), ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz 301, 410, 481, 718
 Ibn al-Shiḥna, Muḥammad 244
 Ibn Shujāʿ 669
 Ibn Sīnā 314
 Ibn Suḥaym 150
 Ibn Surayj 422
 Ibn Ṭāwūs 284, 289
 Ibn Taymiyya 2, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15, 31, 34, 42, 63, 93, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116, 117, 118, 119, 122, 143, 148, 160, 165, 202, 215, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 241, 243, 247, 286, 315, 331, 377, 378, 452, 465, 493, 494, 547, 580, 610, 648
 Ibn Ṭulūn 114
 Ibn Tūmart 184, 193, 196, 211
 Ibn Ṭumlūs 195
 Ibn ʿUmar al-Murtaḍā, Abū Zayd 211
 Ibn ʿUyayna 194
 Ibn Waḍḍāḥ 175, 176, 178, 180
 Ibn Wāṣil 230
 Ibn al-Wazīr 143, 144
 Ibn Yabqā 179, 182
 Ibn Yaʿqūb 679
 Ibn al-Zubayr 190
 Ibrahim, A. 376
 Ibrāhīm b. Adham 29, 46, 47, 48, 129, 617
 Ibrāhīm b. Aḥmad al-Kaynaʿī 6, 131, 132, 133, 134, 139
 Ibrāhīm al-Khawwāṣ 87
 Ibrahim Khushtar Siddiqi al-Qadiri Razvi, Maulana Muhammad 390, 398
 Ibrāhīm Lōdī 418
 Ibrāhīm al-Rashid 166, 275, 741, 749
 Ibrāhīm, Sultan 444
 Ibrāhīm w. al-Kabbāshi 273
 Ibrāhīm, Zakī 94
 Ibrāhīm-i Gülşenī 609
 Ibrāhīmī, Muḥammad b. al-Bashir 335
 Ibrahimović, Mehmed 648
 Idris w. al-Arbāb 277
 al-Idrus, Sayyid Muhsin b. Salim 390
 Ikhilov, D. 526
 ʿIlwān, Muḥammad Maḥmūd 320, 321, 322
 Imam Maṣṣūr 535
 Imber, C.H. 604
 İnalçık 607, 608, 610
 Iqbāl, ʿAbbās 614, 615
 Iqbal, Muhammad 398, 469
 ʿIrāqī 428
 al-Iraqi, Abd al-Rahim b. Muhammad 389
 Irwin, Robert 231
 ʿĪsā Jund Allāh 428, 429, 434
 Isa Yusuf Alptekin 550
 Isfarāyini 615
 Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm 72
 Ishāq, Muḥammad 474
 Işık, Hüseyin Hilmi 145, 149
 Iskandar II 19, 675, 678
 Iskandar Muda 666, 670, 675, 682
 Ismāʿil b. ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Kurdufānī 278
 Ismāʿil b. Abī Bakr al-Muqrī 134
 Ismāʿil b. Aḥmad al-Jirāfi 129
 Ismāʿil b. ʿAlī al-Akwaʿ 132
 Ismāʿil b. Ishāq 86

- Ismā'il b. Ishāq al-Ḥammādi 55
 Ismā'il al-Jabartī 106
 Ismā'il al-Minangkabawī (Ismail Minangkabau) 710, 711, 712, 753
 Ismā'il al-Muqrī 134
 Ismā'il al-Qādi 194
 Ismā'il al-Ru'aynī 182, 185
 Ismā'il, Shāh 625
 Ismā'il Shahid 12, 452, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 472, 474, 474, 479, 480, 483, 487, 488
 Isma'il Simabur 735
 Ismā'il al-Walī 273, 277
 Ismā'il-i Ma'shūqī 609, 610, 611
 Issawi, Charles 157
 Istefan, Isis 321
 'Iyād, al-Qādi 33, 175, 186, 195, 201
 'Izz al-Dīn al-Amīn 270
 al-Ja'barī 118
 al-Jabartī 106, 107, 108, 116
 Ja'far b. Harb 69
 Ja'far Bey 257, 263
 Ja'far, Kamāl 96
 Ja'far al-Khuldī 86, 87
 Ja'far, Muḥammad Kamāl Ibrāhīm 178
 Ja'far al-Ṣādiq 63, 64, 125, 128, 129, 132, 627
 Jahāngīr 433, 442, 445
 al-Jāḥiẓ 32, 69, 90
 Jalal ad-dīn Rumi, Hadrat Maulana 391, 404, 604, see also Rūmī
 al-Jalaynid, Muḥammad Sayyid 1, 2
 Jamā'at 'Alī Shāh 476
 Jamāl ad-Dīn Ṣarrāf, Mawlānā 500
 Jamāl al-Dīn 551
 Jamal al-Dīn, Abdullah 389
 Jambek, Muhammad Jamil 715
 Jāmī 71, 76, 493, 498, 506, 546
 al-Janbiḥī (al-Jinbayhī, al-Junbayhī, al-Junbiḥī) 313, 314, 316
 al-Jandī 98
 Jānjānān, Mirzā Maẓhar-i 458, 474, 478, 489
 Jassiem, Muhammad Tayb 389
 Jāwish, 'Abd al-'Aziz 310
 Jawizādeh 115
 Jaxu, Maba 351
 Jay, Robert 707
 Jayengresmi 688, 689
 Jayengsari 688
 Jayyusi, S.Kh. 178, 195
 al-Jazarī, Shams al-Dīn 108
 al-Jazūlī, Hadrat Muḥammad b. Sulaymān 404
 al-Jazūlī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Razzāq 150, 216, 330
 Jengiz Khan 545
 Jérôme, Saint 112
 Jesus 70, 75, 189, 478
 Jianzhi 590
 Jibril, A. 376
 Jihānshāh 37
 al-Jilānī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān 296, 298, 299, 301, 302
 al-Jilānī, Aḥmad b. Amīr 131
 al-Jilānī, Maḥmūd 299
 al-Jilānī, Salmān 296
 al-Jili, 'Abd al-Karīm 95, 105, 106, 107, 108, 673, 683
 Jin, Y. 590
 al-Jisr, Ḥusayn 597
 Johansen, Julian 321
 John the Baptist 189
 Johns, A.H. 667, 673, 681, 698
 Joshi, P.M. 431
 al-Jubbā'ī, Abū 'Alī 32, 85, 89
 al-Jubbā'ī, Abū Ḥāshim 78, 91, 131
 Juhany, Uwaida M. 148
 al-Junayd b. Muḥammad 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 52, 56, 61, 71, 76, 125, 130, 283, 284, 380, 416, 422, 617, 619, 620, 682
 al-Jurayri, Abū Muḥammad 56
 al-Jurjānī, 'Alī b. Muḥammad 50
 al-Jurmūzī, Ḥasan b. Muḥammad 139
 al-Jushamī, al-Ḥākim 69
 al-Juwaynī 545
 Kaba, Lansiné 339
 Kabara, Nasiru (Muḥammad al-Nāṣir b. Muḥammad al-Mukhtār) 333, 336, 369, 370, 384
 Kably, Mohamed 210
 Kaddouri, A. 182
 Kadić, Rešad 648
 Kadyrov, A. 529
 Kähler, Hans 387, 388, 393
 Kafanga, Muḥammad Sani 333, 378, 379, 384
 Kaḥḥāla, 'Umar 118, 241

- al-Kalābādhī, Abū Bakr 49, 50, 51, 52, 493
 Kaleši, Hasan 653
 Kamajaya 689
 Kamāl Pasha Zādeh 7, 114
 Kamālat al-Dīn 679
 al-Kanawī, Muḥammad Ḥabīb b. ʿAbdallāh 385
 al-Kanawī al-Tijānī, Muḥammad al-Kabīr b. Muḥammad Sanī 385
 Kāndhalawī, Nūr al-Ḥasan Rashīd 455, 456, 462, 479
 Kane, M.M 337
 Kane, Ousmane 10, 329, 350, 357, 366
 Kaptein, N.J.G. 198, 201
 Karadžović, A. 643
 Karamustafa, Ahmat T. 22, 25, 525
 Karīm Khān-i Kirmānī, Muḥammad 628
 Karjeker, Imam 402
 Karlu, Mohammed 402
 Karrar, Ali Salih 270, 269, 270, 275, 745
 Kartodirdjo, Sartono 699, 700, 701
 Kāshānī, ʿAbd al-Razzāq 620, 622
 al-Kāshifī, Kamāl al-Dīn 37
 al-Kashināwī al-Tijānī, Abubakar ʿAtiq b. Khidīr b. Abī Bakr 384
 Kasrawī, Aḥmad-i 16, 624, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637
 Kassis, H. 190, 195
 Kataoka Kazutada 566, 567
 al-Kathinī, ʿAbd al-Ṣamad 331
 Kātip Çelebi 608
 al-Kattānī, Muḥammad 216
 Katz, Jonathan G. 43, 167
 Katz, S.T. 227
 Kaukab Noorani Okarvi, Maulana 402
 Kaykhusraw 57
 Kebek 499
 Keddie, Nikki 287, 289, 631
 Kefeli, Agnès 522
 Kemas Fakhr al-Dīn 682
 Kempe, J.E. 669
 Kemper, Michael 527
 Kerr, M.H. 39
 Kersani, Awad al-Sid 269
 al-Khaḍīr (Khidr) 10, 169, 499
 al-Khalfawī al-Tamīmī 198
 Khalifé, Ignace ʿAbdo 203
 Khalil Ahmad Sahib, Maulana Shaikh 396
 Khalil b. Ishāq 214, 273, 368
 Khalil Pasha 580
 al-Khalilī, Jaʿfar 290
 Khalkhālī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm 286
 Khan 466
 Khan, Ishaq 2
 Khān-i Khānān, ʿAbd al-Raḥīm 428, 429
 Kharaqānī 57
 al-Kharrāz, Abū Saʿīd 3, 27, 29, 57, 58
 Khatib Ali 713, 715
 al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī 68, 70
 Khaṭṭāb, ʿAbd al-ʿAziz Ḥamid 315
 Khawam, René 32
 Khayrallāh Tulfāh 308
 Khayyāt, Jaʿfar 290
 Khazʿal, Shaykh 300, 301
 Khīwaqī, Qādī Raḥmān-berdi 500
 Khodarkovsky, Michael 521
 Khoja Āfāq —> Hidāyat Allāh
 Khoja Ibrāhīm 499, 500, 501, 505
 Khoja Shikh 532
 Khoja-i Khūrd 499
 Khoury, R. 485
 al-Khuḍarī, Muḥammad 597
 Khūnsārī, Muḥammad Bāqir 285, 286
 Khurshid Aḥmad 597
 Khwāfī Khān 430, 431
 Khwāja Saʿd al-Dīn 607
 Khwīshagī Qaṣūri, ʿAbd Allāh 419, 425, 426
 Ki Ngamat Ngaris 694
 Kiai Abbas 721, 722
 Kiai Anas 720, 721
 Kiai Muhammad Ismail 722
 Kieckhefer, Richard 229
 al-Kinānī, ʿIzz al-Dīn 244
 Kissling, H.J. 609
 Kitchener, Lord 267
 Klimovich, L.I. 520
 Knysh, Alexander 135, 197, 226, 243
 Kocaoglu, Timur 529
 Köprülü, Fuad 604, 605
 Kohlberg, Etan 627
 Koiranga, Muḥammad 361
 Kokan, Muhammad Yousuf 416
 Korver, A.E. 717
 Kramer, Robert S. 272, 277, 280
 Kraus, Werner 20, 697, 700, 723, 738
 Kreindler, Isabelle 522
 Krushchev, Nikita S. 526, 529
 al-Kubrā, Najm al-Dīn 514, 532, 619
 Kügelgen, Anke von 527, 758

- Kuhn, Thomas 213
 Kulthūm al-ʿAṭṭābi, Abū ʿAmr 68
 Kumbakarna 687
 al-Kundurī 33
 Kuning 700
 Kupferschmidt, U.M. 317
 al-Kūrānī, Ibrāhīm 667, 668, 678, 679, 681, 737, 739
 al-Kūrānī, Yūsuf b. ʿAbd Allāh 132, 139
 Kurbanov, Haji 526
 Köprülü, Fuad 604, 605
- La Shaer 566, 567
 Labib, Subhi 235
 Lagardièrre, V. 188
 Laʿlīzāde ʿAbd al-Bāqī 609, 611
 al-Lamaṭī, Aḥmad b. al-Mubārak 166, 167, 168
 Landolt, Herman 120
 Lane, Edward W. 707
 Laoust, Henri 148, 610
 Lapidus, Ira M. 231, 234, 238
 Laroui, Abdallah 209, 265, 436
 Lashkar Muḥammad ʿĀrif 422, 427, 428, 431
 Last, Murray 332, 361
 Latief, M. Sanusi 719
 Laugier de Beaucueil, Serge 29
 Laugier de Tassy 258
 Lawrence, Bruce 11, 461, 478
 Laylā 75
 Lazzarini, Edward 521
 Le Châtelier 39
 Lehmann, Fritz 438
 Lemah Abang 671
 Lemercier-Quelquejay, Chantal 42, 522, 534
 Lemmu, ʿĀʾisha 596
 Lerchin 563, 571
 Lévi-Provençal, E. 169, 199
 Levtzion, Nehemia 151, 627
 Lewis, G.L. 114
 Lewis, P. 474
 Lewisohn, Leonard 495
 Lipman, Jonathan 14, 214, 576, 590
 Little, Bruce 521
 Little, Donald P. 228, 230, 234, 235, 240
 Littmann, Enno 23, 24
 Liu, D. 583, 588, 589
 Liu, K.C. 570
 Liu Zhi 553
- Livingstone, J.W. 43
 Loeffler, Reinhold 536
 Loimeier, Roman 10, 327, 329, 334, 337, 357, 370, 374
 Longzi, Z. 522
 López Ortiz, J. 202
 Lowe, W.H. 440
 Lu, J. 583
 Lubbe, G.J.A. 387
 Luizard, Pierre-Jean 16, 38, 41, 95, 292, 302, 307, 627
 Lykoshin, N.S. 527
- Ma Ankang 590
 Ma Anliang 581, 582, 583
 Ma Bufang 583, 584, 585, 587, 589
 Ma Dehai 566, 567
 Ma Fulong 591, 592
 Ma Fuxiang 583, 585, 590
 Ma Gasan 568
 Ma Guiyuan 569
 Ma Guobao 556, 560, 561, 565
 Ma Guoyuan 579
 Ma Guozhen 584
 Ma Hongbin 591
 Ma Hongkui 583, 585, 586, 590, 591
 Ma Hualong 573
 Ma Huisan 579, 580
 Ma Jian 592
 Ma Jun 588, 589
 Ma Kexun 579
 Ma Laichi 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 565, 566, 568, 575
 Ma Laoer 566, 567
 Ma Liesun 598, 599, 600
 Ma Liushisan 566
 Ma Mingxin 559, 560, 561, 562, 564, 565, 572, 575
 Ma Qi 582, 583, 584, 588, 589
 Ma Rubiao 570, 571
 Ma Ruwei 553
 Ma Suonan 560
 Ma, T. 581, 584, 592
 Ma Teng'ai 593, 594
 Ma Tong 554, 556, 558, 571, 580, 581
 Ma Wanfu, Nūḥ 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 587, 589, 590, 597
 Ma Wensheng 553
 Ma Wuyi 566
 Ma Xiangchen 589
 Ma Xiangfu 566, 567, 573

- Ma Xuezhì 561
 Ma Yinghuan 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 572
 Ma Yonglin 570, 571
 Ma Yongrui 571
 Ma Yuanzhang 600
 Ma Zhenwu 591
 al-Madāʿinī 83, 90
 Madelung, Wilferd 7, 51, 58, 126, 127, 129, 141
 Madkūr, Ibrāhīm 95
 Madzhidov, R.M. 527
 Magassouba, M. 354
 al-Maḥbūbī, Maḥmud 546
 al-Mahdī Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā 135
 al-Mahdī ʿAlī b. Muḥammad 131
 al-Mahdī li-dīn Allāh Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn 128, 131
 Mahdī, Muḥsin 24, 25, 203
 al-Mahdī, Ṣādiq 268
 Mahida, Ebrahim Mahomet 394, 401
 Maḥmūd, ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm 96
 Maḥmūd Anjīr Faghnaʿwī 497, 498, 517
 Maḥmūd b. ʿUthmān 91
 Maḥmūd Kāshgharī 545
 Maḥmūd of Gujarat, Sultan 421, 423
 Maḥmūd Pasha 606
 Maigari, Dahiru 374, 375, 376, 378, 379
 Majapahit 695, 696
 Majlisi, Mullā Muḥammad Bāqir 16, 285, 286, 287, 625
 Majlisi, Mullā Taqī-i 625
 Makatov, I.A. 526
 Makdisi, George 30, 31, 67, 160, 200, 493
 Makhluḥ, Ḥasanayn Muḥammad 319
 Makki, M.ʿA. 176, 211
 Malan, D.F. 408
 Malangyuda 699
 Malick, S. 410
 Mālik b. Anas 28, 72, 130, 175, 201, 207
 Mālik b. Dīnār 47, 48
 Malik al-Maḥmūd 669
 al-Malik al-Nāṣir 23
 al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ 668
 Maʿmar b. Aḥmad al-Iṣfahānī, Abū Maṣṣūr 29, 30, 31
 Mambetaliev, Satybaldy 528
 al-Maʾmūn 68, 70, 71, 75
 Maʾmūrī 430
 Manḩrī, Sharafuddin 470
 Manav, Mehmed Emin 640
 al-Manbijī, Naṣr 97, 99, 100, 233
 Mangkunagara IV 692
 Maṣṣūr, Shaykh 550
 al-Manṣūr ʿAbd Allāh 106
 al-Manṣūr ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥamza 135, 136, 139, 140, 141
 Maṣṣūr ʿAlī Nāṣif 597
 Maṣṣūr b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Iṣbahānī, Abū Naṣr 63
 al-Manṣūr b. Abī ʿĀmir 183
 Maṣṣūr b. ʿAmmār al-Sulamī, Abū'l-Sarī 27, 68, 73
 Maṣṣūr al-Kāzarūnī 115
 al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad 7, 130, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142
 Maṣṣūr Shāh 669
 al-Mansur, Sultan 746
 al-Manūnī, Muḥammad 191, 210, 211, 212
 Manz, Beatrice 554
 al-Maqassārī, Muḥammad Yūsuf b. ʿAbd Allāh Abū'l-Maḥāsīn al-Tāj al-Khalwatī (Yūsuf al-Tāj al-Khalwatī al-Maqasari; Yusuf Makassar, Yusuf Makassari, Shaykh Yūsuf) 388, 396, 411, 414, 681, 682, 706, 735
 al-Maqbalī, Ṣāliḥ 235
 al-Maqqarī 77
 al-Marāghī, Kamāl al-Dīn 98
 al-Marāghī, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā 316, 317, 318
 al-Marʿashī, Zāhir al-Dīn 127
 al-Marghinānī, Burhān al-Dīn 546
 Marín, Manuela 175, 176, 177, 178, 184, 191, 200
 al-Marrākushī 186
 al-Marṣafī, Ḥusayn 310
 Martin, B. 758
 Martin, Richard C. 470, 524
 Martin, Vanessa 632
 Martin, Virginia 522, 536
 Martínez Enamorado, V. 200
 Marty, M.E. 357
 Maʿrūf al-Karkhī 73, 74, 283, 284, 617, 619
 Maseehullah Khan, Hadhrat Mohammed 396

- Maslama b. Qāsim al-Zayyāt al-Qurṭubī
176, 177, 178
- Mason, Herbert 614
- Masri, F.H. El- 361
- Massignon, Louis 28, 30, 31, 36, 56, 197,
199, 614, 618
- Masud, M.Kh. 199, 201, 202, 203, 204
- Mas'ūd Bakk 423, 425
- al-Mas'ūdī, 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan 67
- Ma'šūm 'Alī Shāh (Muḥammad
Ma'šūm-i Shīrāzī) 622
- al-Matbūlī, Ibrāhīm 245
- Matebe Shah, Abd al-Rahman 386
- Maulawī Dīn Muḥammad 479
- Mavlānā 'Isā 608
- Mawdūd Lālā Chishtī 431
- Mawdūdī, Abū'l-A'la 452, 453, 466, 596
- Mawlānā Khālīd 306, 710
- Mawlawī —> Rūmī
- Mayet, Zuleikha 391
- Mbakke, 'Abd al-Aḥad 349, 353
- Mbakke, Ahmad 345
- Mbakke, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā 354
- Mbakke, Saliou 354
- Mbaye, Rawane 353
- McCarthy, Thomas 209
- McChesney, Robert D. 537
- McHugh, Neil 270, 271, 272, 273
- Médina, Sérigne Mbakke 354
- Meḥmed 'Amīqī 612
- Mehmed I 605
- Mehmed II 606
- Meḥmed Neshrī 605
- Meḥmed V Reshād 718
- Mehmet III 140, 142
- Meier, Fritz 2, 26, 29, 31, 36, 40, 48,
159, 160, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167,
169, 194, 232, 460, 493
- Mejjid Khan 537
- Memon, Muhammad Umar 232, 233,
234, 235, 493
- Menavino, Giovan Antonio 25
- Mercier, Ernest 253, 264
- Metcalf, Barbara 471, 475, 491
- Mian, W. 586, 590
- Michel, T. 234
- Michot, Jean R. 493
- Midhat Pacha 295
- Miklukho-Maklai, N.D. 497
- Milner, A.C. 666, 670
- Minna, Mahmud 361
- Miquel, André 24
- Mir Dard 478
- Mir Muḥammad Nu'mān Naqshbandī
429
- al-Mirghani, Abū Bakr Ja'far 280
- al-Mirghani, Ja'far al-Šādiq 274
- al-Mirghani, Muḥammad Sirr al-Khatim
280
- al-Mirghani, Muḥammad 'Uthmān 9, 10,
166, 171, 172, 273, 274, 280
- Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad 472
- Mirzā Hindāl 419
- Mirzā Muḥammad Ḥakīm 442
- al-Miskīn, Abū Bakr 385
- Mitchell, R.P. 319
- Mitchell, Timothy 522
- Miyān Wajih al-Dīn 421
- al-Mizjāji 106
- al-Mizjāji al-Naqshbandī, Muḥammad b.
al-Bāqī 681
- Mohajir al-Makki, Hajji Imdadullah 404
- Mohammad Salim al-Kalālī 750
- Mohammad Tahir bin Jalaluddin al-
Azhari 750, 752, 754, 755
- Mohd. Sarim b. Haji Mustajab 750
- Mohideen Khan 402
- Mohideen Sahib 398, 399
- Molé, Marwan 53, 502, 619
- Molla Ilāhi 612
- Moojan, Momen 287
- Moosa, Maulana Ibrahim 411
- Morony, M.G. 176
- Moses 65, 75
- Mourad II 606
- Mu Shouqi 556
- al-Mu'ayyad bi'llāh Aḥmad b. al-
Ḥusayn 125, 126, 128, 129, 131
- al-Mu'ayyad bi'llāh Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza
129, 131
- Mubārak 440, 446, 447
- Mudarris, Mawlā 'Abd al-Karīm 306
- Muddaththir b. Ibrāhīm al-Ḥajjāz 278,
279
- Muderizović, Riza 642
- al-Mufid, Shaykh 614, 615
- Muḥaddith Dihlawī, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq 446,
449, 450, 474
- al-Muhallabī 83
- Muḥammad, the Prophet, le Prophète 3,
4, 9, 11, 12, 33, 41, 43, 44, 61, 62, 70,
75, 84, 85, 89, 90, 92, 103, 126, 129,

- 137, 138, 139, 140, 142, 156, 159, 162, 164, 167, 169, 181, 185, 195, 200, 206, 232, 234, 240, 274, 275, 279, 330, 334, 335, 359, 360, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 370, 373, 374, 375, 377, 379, 380, 387, 388, 392, 393, 394, 399, 400, 401, 404, 406, 408, 409, 410, 412, 426, 428, 440, 446, 454, 458, 461, 462, 463, 472, 473, 476, 477, 478, 480, 481, 482, 484, 485, 486, 489, 490, 491, 508, 509, 578, 586, 615, 616, 618, 634, 648, 651, 668, 669, 671, 677, 680, 695, 712, 713, 715, 721, 723, 727, 728, 752, 753
- Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Rahīm 279
- Muhammad, Abdullahi 384
- Muḥammad al-ʿAbsī, al-Qāḍī 137, 138
- Muḥammad Afdal, Hājī 489
- Muḥammad Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh, the Mahdi 8, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281
- Muḥammad Ainūma b. Muḥammad Aisami 380, 381, 385
- Muḥammad ʿAlī 225
- Muḥammad ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib 713
- Muḥammad ʿAlī Khān 548
- Muḥammad al-Amin Dafʿ Allāh 276
- Muḥammad Amin al-Hindi 275
- Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAnsī 137, 139
- Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Masarra → Ibn Masarra
- Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Khānī 726
- Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh, Sayyid 140, 141, 142
- Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Sulaymān al-Qarʿawī 146
- Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb 8, 93, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 378, 410, 464, 465, 474, 478, 481, 580
- Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh b. al-Muṭṭalib al-Shaybānī 64
- Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Sālīm 62
- Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā b. al-Muẓaffar 141
- Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ḥamdī 141
- Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Kattānī 89
- Muḥammad b. ʿAṭf Allāh al-ʿAbsī 137
- Muḥammad b. Ghāzī al-Miknāsī 216
- Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Daylamī 128
- Muḥammad b. Ḥisān 143
- Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā b. Bishr al-Anṣārī al-Mayūrqi 184
- Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr 143
- Muḥammad b. ʿIsā al-Ilbīrī 185
- Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Amīr 144
- Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Dāwūdī 127
- Muḥammad b. Khalaf al-Awsī 186
- Muḥammad b. Khaṭīr al-Dīn b. Khwāja al-ʿAṭṭār → Muḥammad Ghawth
- Muḥammad b. Mahdī al-Kurdī 713
- Muḥammad b. al-Mukhtār al-Shinqīṭī 279
- Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Shakītibī 272
- Muḥammad b. Nizām al-Khwārazmī al-Arzangī 500
- Muḥammad b. Rushayd al-Sabtī 216
- Muḥammad b. Saʿūd (Muḥammad b. Saud) 157, 414
- Muḥammad b. Shaddād al-Ḥalabī 116
- Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ 175
- Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā Bahrān 141, 142
- Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Bannāʾ 29
- Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Fadlī 134
- Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Ḥaḍramī 128
- Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Qaṭṭān 63
- Muḥammad Bābā Sammāsī 497
- Muḥammad al-Bāqir 125
- Muḥammad Bello b. ʿUthmān b. Fūdī 359, 361, 362, 363
- Muḥammad al-Falūjī 115
- Muḥammad al-Ghālī 363
- Muḥammad Ghawth Gwāliyārī 11, 416, 417, 418, 419, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434
- Muḥammad al-Ghurāb 260
- Muḥammad al-Ḥanafī, Muḥammad 98
- Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī 148
- Muḥammad al-Ḥuwwārī 253
- Muḥammad II, Raja 746
- Muḥammad IV, Raja 746, 748
- Muḥammad Jaʿfar-i Mahjūb 622
- Muḥammad Jawnpūri 440
- Muḥammad Karrār 272
- Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Sanūsī 275, 281
- Muḥammad al-Makki 278, 281

- Muḥammad al-Mubārāk, ʿAbd Allāh 279
 Muḥammad Muḥsin —> Dūdū Miyān
 Muhammad Musa 703
 Muhammad Nawawi Banten 743
 Muḥammad Pārsā 517
 Muḥammad Saʿid 299, 302
 Muḥammad Saʿid bin Jamaluddin al-Linggī 742, 743, 744, 745, 747, 748, 751, 755
 Muḥammad Saʿid, Maulana 391
 Muhammad Saʿid al-Qaddāl 269
 Muḥammad Saʿd b. Tantaʾ 713
 Muḥammad Šādiq 423
 Muḥammad Shafiʿi bin Muḥammad Saleh bin Abdur Rahman 742
 Muhammad al-Sharif b. Nūr al-Dāʾim 270, 271, 280
 Muḥammad Sulaymān 279
 Muḥammad Tawfiq 311
 Muḥammad al-Ṭayyib al-Bašīr 274
 Muḥammad ʿUmar al-Bannā 279
 Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Burhānī 95
 Muḥammad V 201
 Muḥammad w. Sāttī 269
 Muhammad Yūsuf 554
 al-Muḥāsibī, al-Ḥārith b. Asad 27, 28, 29, 35, 49, 75, 129, 164, 185, 194, 195, 283
 al-Muḥassin al-Tanūkhī 4, 32, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 90, 91
 Muḥibb ʿAlī 443
 al-Muḥibbī, Muḥammad Amīn 674
 Muḥyi al-Dīn-i Qaramānī 609, 610
 Muḥyi-i Gülshenī 609
 Muʿin al-Dīn Chishtī (Moinuddin Chishti, Sultanul Hind Khwaja) 401, 404, 438, 445, 446, 450
 Muʿiniyān, ʿAlī Aṣghar 498
 Mujaddidi, Muḥammad Iqbāl 419
 Mujezinović, Mehmed 639
 Mukaddam al-Qaderi, Maulana Ahmad 393, 401, 402, 413, 414
 Mukhtar al-Kuntī 363
 Mukhtar, Mansur Ibrahim 327
 Mullā ʿAbdullāh 287
 Mullā Šadrā 621, 622, 626, 628
 Mundhir b. Saʿid al-Ballūṭī 182
 Muniri-i Belghradī 609
 Muʾnis, H. 186
 Munkar 489
 Munson, H. 205
 Muqaddas-i Ardabīlī 622
 al-Muqrānī 258
 Murabit —> Dallas, Ian
 Murād 442
 Murād Bey 257, 259
 al-Mūrītānī, Muḥammad Ibn al-Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh 375
 Murodov, O. 526
 Murtaḍā Anṣārī 16, 289
 Murtala b. Rājī 362
 Musa Ḥelebi 605
 Mūsā al-Kāzim 63
 Mūsā Sayrānī 13
 Mūsā al-Yūsī 117
 Musabayov, Bahāʾ al -Dīn 550
 Musaylima 105
 Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj 463, 481
 Muṣṭafā, Fārūq Aḥmad 320
 al-Mustaʿšim 210
 al-Muʿtaḍid 71
 al-Muʿtamid 55
 Mutawa, Abdulla M. 148
 al-Mutawakkil 57, 76
 al-Mutawakkil Ismāʿil b. al-Qāsim 143
 al-Mutawakkil al-Muṭaḥhar b. Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Ḥamzī 136
 al-Mutawakkil Sharaf al-Dīn Yaḥyā b. Shams al-Dīn 6, 136, 141
 al-Muṭiʿī, Muḥammad Bakhīt 315
 al-Muwaḥfaq 27, 55, 59
 Muẓaffar Khān 442
 Myhrman, David 242
 al-Nabhānī, Yūsuf 115
 al-Nābulusī, ʿAbd al-Ghanī 110, 115, 120, 149, 713
 Naddaff, Sandra 24
 al-Nadīm, ʿAbd Allāh 310
 Nadjib, Emha Ainun 690
 al-Nadwī al-Siwānī, Muḥammad Faḍl al-Raḥmān 433
 Nafisi, S. 502
 Nagel, Tilman 33, 88
 al-Nahrajūrī, Abū Yaʿqūb 178
 al-Najāshī 64
 Najib Pacha 304
 Najjaar, Abu Bakr 398
 Nakamura, Mitsuo 716
 Nakash, Yitzhak 290

- Nakir 489
 Nana Asmā^c 361
 Nānawtawī, Muḥammad Qāsim 396, 472, 491
 Napoleon 43
 al-Naqīb, Rajab 293, 295
 Naqshband, Bahā^o ad-Dīn 496, 497, 498, 499, 503, 502, 505, 506, 507, 510, 516, 517, 538
 Nasafi, Aziz al-Dīn-i 546, 597, 619, 622
 al-Nāṣir Aḥmad 143
 al-Nāṣir li'l-Ḥaqq 131
 al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā 135
 al-Nāṣir Muḥammad 225
 Nāṣir —> Nasser
 al-Nāṣir Ṣalāh al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Alī 6, 106, 111, 117, 131, 133, 134, 135
 Naṣr b. Hārūn 80
 Nasr, Seyyed Hossein 284, 502
 Nasser, Jamāl 'Abd 319, 322, 658
 Naudé, Jacobus 13
 al-Nawbakhtī, Abū Sahl 84, 614
 Nayancheng 566, 567, 573
 Naẓar Khwāja 547
 Nazeem Mohammed 399, 402, 411
 al-Naẓifī, Muḥammad Faṭḥa 364
 al-Naẓẓām 69, 70
 Nev'izāde 'Atāyī 608, 609
 Ni'matullāh-i Walī-i Kirmānī 41
 Niass (Niasse), Ibrāhīm (Ibrāhīm Niyās al-Kawlakhi) 282, 352, 363, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 375, 379
 Niass, Sidi Lamine 350
 Niasse, Abdoulaye 339
 Nicholson, Reynold A. 50, 51, 70, 163, 616
 Nidhami al-Ashrafi, Arif-Allah Ashraf al-Chishtī 390
 Niebuhr, Carsten 293
 Nieuwenhuijze, C.A.O. van 673
 Nik Abdul Aziz b. Hġ. Nik Hassan 739
 Nik Wan Ahmad, Haji 741
 Niṣār, Aḥmad 1
 Nizām ad-Dīn Awliyā 444
 Nizām ad-Dīn of Narnaul 447
 Nizām al-Dīn Aḥmad 418
 Nizām al-Dīn Ambethi 449
 Nizām, Shaykh 430
 Nizami, Khaliq Ahmed 416, 425, 431, 441, 444, 502
 Noé (Noah) 102, 428
 Nohlen, Dieter 731
 Norris, H.T. 358
 Nourou Tall, Seydou 353
 Nūbār Bāshā 312
 Nufawa, Malam Dudu (Abū Bakr Nūfawā b. Muḥammad) 385
 al-Numayrī, Ja'far 269
 al-Nuqrāshī, Maḥmūd Fahmī 318
 Nūr al-Dā'im, 'Abd al-Maḥmūd 269, 272
 Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd 230
 Nurhakim, Kiyahi 698, 699
 al-Nūrī, Abū'l-Ḥasan (Abū'l-Ḥusayn) Aḥmad b. Muḥammad 3, 26, 27, 50, 51, 55, 56, 58, 118, 118, 126
 Nurul Mubeen, Shaikh Sayyid 411
 Nuscheler, Franz 731
 Nwyia, Paul 55, 119, 174, 188, 192, 194, 195, 198, 202, 203, 204
 Ocak, Ahmet Yaşar 15, 607, 611
 Özbek 499
 Ōishi, M.Sh. 546
 Olcott, Anthony 529
 Olesen, Niels Henrik 235, 493
 Orkhān Begh 606
 Ormsby, Eric 112
 Oruç b. 'Ādil 607
 Osman, Mohammad Taib 670
 Ost, Zoe 225
 O'Fahey, R. Seán 8, 40, 43, 147, 165, 167, 170, 171 269, 270, 274, 467
 O'Kane, John 32, 164, 170
 Paden, John 357, 358, 361, 362, 364, 369
 Padia, G.M.I. 397
 Padwick, Constance 151
 Paksoy, H.B. 529, 530
 Palembang, Abdussamad ('Abd al-Ṣamad al-Fālimbānī, Palimbānī, Sayyid 'Abd al-Ṣamad b. 'Abd Allāh (or 'Abd al-Raḥmān) al-Jawī 19, 682, 683, 684, 685, 710
 Pangeran Antasari 700
 Pānīpatī, Qāḍī Thanā'ullāh 484, 486
 Parker, Cassim 411
 Parker, Richard 225
 Pasha, Kamran 530
 Paul, Jürgen 502
 Paye, Ousmane 356

- Pelliot, P. 542, 543
 Penghulu 690, 691
 Pérez, R. 203, 214, 216, 220
 Perlman, M. 235, 237
 Peskes, Esther 8, 9, 147, 149, 156
 Peters, Rudolph 151, 278
 Petry, Carl F. 231, 238, 239, 240, 242, 247
 Pharaoh 60, 89, 141
 Philby, St John 302
 P'hul (Bahlul) 418, 419, 424
 Pierce, Richard 521
 Pigeaud, G.Th. 666, 667, 671, 689
 Pijper, G.F. 699, 717, 720, 721, 722
 Pinault, David 24
 Pires, Tome 666
 Plassis, Barend du 408
 Poliakov, Sergei 535, 536, 537
 Popovic, Alexandre 9, 18, 19, 38, 143, 307, 458, 460, 467, 502, 534, 548, 554, 560, 600, 652, 660, 697
 Potogija, Mehmed 648
 Pourjavady, Nasrollah 15, 16, 29
 Pouzet, L. 191, 493
 Pretzl, Otto 25
 Pseudo-Nāshi' 69
 Puente, C. de la 191, 194, 198, 202
 Puig, J. 192
 Putra, Sherif 660
- al-Qabbāb 195, 220, 221, 222, 223
 al-Qaderi, Ghulam Sarwar 402
 al-Qaderi, Hassen 402
 al-Qadhdhāfi, Mu'ammār 441
 Qadi, Abd al-Latif Imam 390
 al-Qādirī, Abū'l-Ṭayyib 375
 Qā'it Bāy 7, 111, 225, 243, 246, 247
 Qalā'ūn 225
 al-Qanāzi' 194
 Qaramāni 609
 Qardāwī 596
 al-Qārī al-Baghdādī 106
 Qāshāni 98, 108, 116, 120, 275
 Qāsim (Kassem) 307
 al-Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm 125, 129
 Qāsim b. Muẓaffar b. Maḥmūd b. 'Asākir 107
 Qāsim b. Umm Hāni' 260
 Qāsim Lafgūn 263
 al-Qaṣṭallāni, Quṭb al-Dīn 42, 99, 116, 118
- al-Qayrawāni, 'Abd al-'Azīz 218, 219, 220
 al-Qaysari, Dāwūd 108, 110, 116, 620
 Qazwīni-i Rāzi, 'Abd al-Jalil-i 618
 Qi Ahong 561
 Qianlong 542, 543, 544, 572
 Qimu 566
 Qummi, Muḥammad Ṭāhir-i 622
 al-Qūnawī, Ṣadr al-Dīn 98, 100, 101, 105, 228, 427, 619, 620, 622
 al-Qūni al-Miṣri, Wafā Muḥammad 310
 Qurashi w. al-Zayn 271
 Qurayshī, Muḥammad Zubayr Ghulam Nabi 427, 431
 al-Qurṭubī, Muḥammad 240
 al-Qushāshī, Aḥmad 678
 al-Qushayrī, Abū'l-Qāsim 33, 36, 49, 51, 76, 88, 89, 107, 185, 195, 221, 427, 617, 618, 682
 Quṣūri, Muḥammad Ṣādiq 471
 Qutbuddin Kagee, Maulana 397
 Qutlugh Timūr 498
- Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya 283, 618
 Raden Muhammad Musa 702, 703
 Radtke, Bernd 2, 9, 32, 40, 43, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 268, 270, 273, 274, 467
 Raffles, Thomas Stamford 701
 Raḥīm Dād 418
 Rahman, Fazlur 414, 467
 Raja Ali Haji of Riau 687, 688
 Rājī, Moddibo Muḥammad 362
 Rāmīṭani, 'Alī 'Azizān 13, 493, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 515, 517
 Ramz-i Ilāhi, Nūr 431
 al-Rāniri 19, 666, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 682, 683, 684, 685, 706, 735
 al-Raqqī, Ibrāhīm b. Dāwūd al-Qaṣṣār 76
 Rashid Aḥmad Gangohi 472, 491
 Rāshid, Sayyid Muḥammad Muṭi' Allāh Burhānpūri 417, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 434
 Rashtī, Kāzim-i 628
 Rasjidi, Haji Muhammad 689, 693
 Rasulaev, Abdurrahman 524
 al-Rāwī, Khāshī' 308
 Rāz-i Ilāhi 418, 429, 430, 431, 433, 434

- Raza Khan, Ala Hazrat Maulana Ahmad (Riḍā Khān, Mawlawi Aḥmad) 397, 400, 410
- Rāzī, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Murtaḍā °Ali °Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn 15, 16, 615, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 621, 622
- Refik, Ahmet 607
- Reissner, Johannes 147
- Reysoo, Fenneke 331
- Richards, John 438, 442, 445, 447
- Riḍā, Muḥammad Rashid 2, 42, 94, 99, 146, 232, 303, 310, 314, 335, 717
- Rinn, Louis 39, 248, 266
- Ritter, Hellmut 26, 34, 49, 54, 92
- Rizvi, Saiyid Athar Abbas 2, 416, 419, 422, 423, 426, 440, 448, 453, 455, 459, 462, 464, 465, 466
- Robinson, David 337
- Robson, James 463
- Robson, S.O. 682, 693
- Rodríguez López, J. 203
- Rodríguez Mañas, F. 191, 192, 204
- Roff, William R. 700, 744, 746, 749, 754, 755
- Rogers, A. 442
- Rogers, J.M. 38
- Rosander, Eva Evers 1
- Rosenthal, Franz 235, 236, 237
- Ross, E.D. 545
- Rubiera, M.J. 198, 200
- Rūmī, Jalāl al-Dīn 546, 622, 635
- Rundgren, F. 312
- Ruwaym b. Aḥmad 86, 90, 126
- Rūzbihān Baqlī 432
- Sabin, R. 225
- Sa°d Allāh Efendi 93
- Sa°d b. Aḥmad 369
- Sa°d Zaghlūl 312
- al-Ṣadafī, Abū °Ali 194
- al-Sādāt, Anwar 322
- Sa°dī 425, 635
- Ṣadr al-Dīn-i Shirāzī —> Mullā Ṣadrā
- al-Sāḥilī, Abū °Abd Allāh al-Mu°ammam 200
- al-Saḥmarānī, As°ad 333
- Shaḥnūn 214
- Saib, Yunus 387
- Sa°id, Aḥmad 473
- Sa°id b. Ḥassān al-Ṣā°igh 175
- Said, Edward 522
- Saidbaev, T.S. 530
- Saidorihocaev, A. 530
- al-Sakhāwī, Muḥammad b. °Abd al-Rahmān 7, 97, 98, 99, 108, 109, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122
- Saksono, Widji 671, 672
- al-Saksyūwī, °Abd Allāh b. °Abd al-Wāḥid 211
- Saladin (Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī) 187, 225, 230, 231
- Ṣalāḥ b. °Abd al-Khālīq al-Jaḥḥāf 135
- Salāma b. Mānī° 149
- Salga, Mallam Muḥammadu 368
- Salie, Abd al-Rahman 398
- Ṣāliḥ b. Mahdī al-Maqbalī 143, 144
- Ṣāliḥ b. Yanṣāren al-Māgīrī, Abū Muḥammad 221
- Ṣāliḥ Bey 264, 265, 266
- Ṣāliḥ, Cheikh 336
- Salih Muhammad Nur 271
- Ṣāliḥ, the Prophet 66
- Salihspahić, Džemal 658
- Salihspahić, Mehmed 653, 658
- Salim 580
- Salim, °Abd al-Majid 318
- Sālim b. °Abdallāh b. Sumayr al-Ḥaḍramī 701, 711, 712, 729, 753
- Salim Chishtī 11, 443, 445
- Salim I 111, 114
- Salim, Prince 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 450
- Salleh, Mohammed b. Nik Mohd. 746
- Salmān Pāk 307
- Salomon 483
- al-Sam°ānī, Abū Sa°d °Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad 79
- al-Samannūdī, Ibrāhīm 315
- al-Sāmarrā°ī, Yūnus Ibrāhīm 293, 299, 308
- Samb, A. 353
- al-Sammān, Muḥammad b. °Abd al-Karīm 269, 709
- Samsō, J. 200
- Sanderson, G.N. 267
- Sanneh, Lamine 332
- Santiago, E. 198
- al-Sanūsī, Muḥammad b. °Ali 10, 165, 254
- Sanyal, Usha 471, 472, 476, 477
- Sāri Oghlī, Khalil Ibrāhīm 506, 517

- Sarī al-Saqāṭī 55, 75, 118, 617, 619
 Sarkin Malamai 368
 al-Sarrāj, Abū Naṣr 49, 50, 51, 52, 54,
 56, 70, 73, 163
 Sartain, E.M. 112, 115, 242, 243
 Satan 91, 126
 Satuq Boghra Khan 550
 Sauzet, H. 258
 al-Šawī, Aḥmad 317, 318, 320
 al-Šawī, ‘Išām 318
 Sayf al-Dīn 450
 Sayf al-Rijāl 676
 Sayrāmī, Mullā Mūsā 543, 544, 548, 549,
 550
 al-Sayyādī, Muḥammad Abū’l-Hudā 38,
 295, 296, 297, 304, 305
 Sayyid Muḥammad 140
 Sayyid Quṭb 596, 597
 Sayyid Usman (‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd Allāh
 b. ‘Aqīl b. Yahyā al-‘Alawī) 711,
 712, 714
 Sa’ad Zungur 371
 Scarcia, Gianroberto 287
 Schatzmiller, M. 200
 Scheich Ismail 744
 Schimmel, Annemarie 55, 70, 78, 151,
 228, 229, 237, 238, 241, 245, 397,
 398, 407, 472, 478, 485
 Schrieke, B.J.O. 713, 715, 717, 718
 Schulze, Reinhard 146, 172
 Scot Erigène 102
 Scott, P.H.G. 357
 Sehović, Fikrija 642
 Selim 570
 Sell, E. 50
 Semenov, A.A. 497
 Senghor 345, 348, 353
 Sha‘bān b. Jallūn 264
 Shabtūn 194
 al-Sha‘bi 201
 al-Shādhilī, Abū’l-Ḥasan ‘Alī 119, 229,
 381
 al-Shāfi‘ī, Muḥammad b. Idrīs 33, 130,
 152
 Shāh ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz, Shāh ‘Abdul‘azīz
 454, 460, 471, 474
 Shāh ‘Abdu’l-Qādir 455
 Shah Ahmad Mukhtar Siddiqui, Maulana
 401
 Shah Ahmad Noorani Siddiqui, Maulana
 395, 401
 Shāh Faḍl Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī
 477
 Shāh, Ghulām ‘Alī 490
 Shāh Jahān 449
 Shāh, Jamā‘at ‘Alī 471
 Shāh Suwār 243
 Shāh Waliullah Dihlawī 452, 455, 457,
 458, 459, 464, 465, 471, 474, 478, 480
 Shahīd Awwal 284
 Shahīd Thāni 284
 Shāhjahānpūri (Shāhābādī), Muḥammad
 Sulṭān Khān 455, 459, 463
 Shahrani, Nazif 533, 536
 Shahrazād 22
 Shahrīyār 22
 Shāhrukh 37
 Shakar Ganj, Bābā Farīd 470
 Shākīr al-Mukhtārī 546, 547
 al-Shāmī, ‘Abd al-Shukūr 679
 Shāmil 535
 Shams al-Dīn b. Sharaf al-Dīn 138
 Shams al-Dīn, Muḥammad Ḥasan 318,
 319
 Shams al-Dīn, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā 312
 Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrānī 19
 Shams-i Tabrizī 622
 Shaqīq al-Balkhī 29, 46, 47, 48, 69
 Sharaf al-Dīn Yahyā b. Sharaf al-Dīn
 136, 137, 139
 al-Sha‘rānī, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb 60, 68,
 112, 152, 167, 187, 245, 488
 al-Sha‘rāwī, Muḥammad 597
 Shareef, Abdul-Kader A. 233
 al-Sharīf al-Ajall al-Imām Jamāl al-
 Islām 33
 Sharīf Ḥusayn 718
 al-Sharjī 128, 134
 Sharkey, Heather J. 273, 278, 279
 Sharofi, Haki 660
 al-Sharqī, Ṭālib 290
 al-Shāṭibi 202
 Shāṭir Buṣaylī ‘Abd al-Jalīl 269
 Shaṭṭārī, ‘Abd Allāh 434
 Shaw, R.B. 545
 Shaw, Stanford J. 607, 608
 al-Shāwīrī, Aḥmad b. Zayd 134
 al-Shawkānī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī 12,
 143, 144, 464, 465, 466
 al-Shaybī, Kāmil Muḥammad 284
 Shāyista Khān 430
 Shaykh bin Ahmad al-Hadi 750

- Shaytān 102
 al-Shayyāl, Jamāl al-Dīn 230
 Shellabear, William G. 713
 Shēr Shāh Sūrī 419, 421, 424, 426, 444
 Sherwani, H.K. 431
 al-Shibli, Abū Bakr 33, 54, 82, 83, 90,
 91, 118, 130, 616
 Shihāb al-Dīn b. ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad
 682
 Shinobu, Ono 554
 Shiraishi, Takashi 717
 Shoshan, Boaz 226, 234, 235, 238, 525
 Shouyi, Bai 582
 Shuʿayb, Muḥammad al-ʿĀshir 379, 385
 Shuhdī, Fathī Maḥmūd 318
 al-Shushtarī 197
 Shūshtarī, Nūrullāh-i 620
 Sibghat Allāh 430
 Sidasus, A. 189
 ʿSiddiq Ḥasan Khān 474
 al-Siddiqī al-Qadiri, Maulana Abd al-
 Alim (Maulana Abdul Aleem
 Siddiqui) 390, 401
 Sidi ʿAbd al-Latīf b. Barakāt 262
 Sidi ʿAbd al-Raḥmān 260
 Sidi Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Gharbī 263
 Sidi ʿĀʿisa 258
 Sidi al-Akhḍar 264
 Sidi Bal ʿAbbās 262
 Sidi ʿĪsūs 258
 Sidi al-Kattānī 264
 Sidi Khālīd 257
 Sidi Maḥammad 258
 Sidi Maṣṣūr 255
 Sidi Muḥammad b. al-Aṭrash 257
 Sidi Muḥammad Shakeh Kalifa 749
 Sidi Shaykh 262
 Sidi Sinnā 258
 Siger de Brabant 96
 Sikandar Lodi 444
 Sikandarpūrī, Wakīl Aḥmad 485, 486
 Šiljka, Bedri 659
 Simnānī, ʿAlāʾ al-Dawla 97, 120, 499
 Sinān Pasha 139, 140, 142
 Singh, Nagendra 423
 Sirāj al-Dīn b. Aḥmad al-Junayd 270
 Sirhindī, Aḥmad 97, 406, 428, 429, 433,
 452, 470, 474, 475, 478
 Sirhindī Mujaddidi, Muḥammad Ḥasan
 Jān 478, 479
 Sirriyeh, Elisabeth 1
 Sitalā 480
 Siti Jenar 19, 671, 672
 Siyālkōṭī, Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Mir 474
 Skenderpaša 644
 Slezkine, Yuri 522
 Smailagić, Jusuf-Zija 645
 Smajlović, Ahmed 655
 Smith, Anthony 533
 Smith, G.R. 387, 391
 Smith, Grace M. 226, 606
 Smith, Jane I. 229
 Smith, M. 48
 Smith, Robert 569
 Snasarev, G.P. 532
 Snouck Hurgronje, Christiaan 160, 703,
 705, 711, 739, 744, 754
 Sobieroj, Florian 4, 29, 32, 71, 331
 Soebardi, S. 671, 672, 674, 689
 Soeradiopoera, R.Ng. 689
 Sohrweide, Hanna 607
 Solaqzāde 607
 Soliman le Magnifique 608, 609
 Souʿyb 726
 Spaulding, Jay 270
 Spuler, Bertold 387
 St. Louis 231
 Staffa, Susan J. 231
 Stalin, J.W. 523
 Stange, Paul 727
 Steenbrink, Karel 20, 700, 701, 702, 703,
 710
 Steinbach, Udo 146, 320
 Stern, S.M. 49, 229
 Strausz-Hupe, Robert 521
 Streusand, Douglas 439
 Stroumsa, S. 175
 Strydom, J.G. 408
 Su Ahong 564
 Su Sishisan (Su Forty-three) 562, 563,
 564, 565, 572, 573
 al-Ṣubayḥī, Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥusayn b.
 Bakr 54
 al-Subkī, Maḥmūd Khaṭṭāb 17, 315, 316,
 al-Subkī, Tāj al-Dīn 6, 107, 241, 242
 al-Subkī, Taqī al-Dīn 108
 Subtelny, Marie Eva 532
 Sufi Šāhib (Soofie Sahib, Hazrat) 387,
 390, 391, 391, 392, 394, 396, 401,
 402, 404, 413
 Sufyān al-Thawrī 73, 74, 130, 618
 Suharto 726

- al-Suhrawardī, Abū Ḥafṣ Shihāb al-Dīn
 ʿUmar 31, 34, 107, 144, 207, 283, 427
 al-Suhrawardī, Abū'l-Najīb 132
 al-Suhrawardī, Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ 299,
 308
 al-Suhrawardī, Yahyā b. Ḥabash 32, 57,
 621
 Sukarno 725, 726
 Sukhareva, O.A. 530, 531
 Šukrić, Nijaz 656
 Sulaiman Ar-Rasuli 719, 722, 723, 724
 al-Sulamī, Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān 36 48,
 54, 56, 63, 64, 68, 71, 73, 76, 88, 89
 Sulaymān b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad
 b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb 146
 Sulaymān b. Saḥmān al-Najdī 146
 Sulaymān Pasha 225
 Sulaymān al-Zuhdī 712
 Suleiman Effendi 750
 Sultan ʿAlī 305
 al-Sumatrānī, Shams al-Dīn 672, 673,
 674, 676, 677, 682, 683
 Sunan Giri 672
 Sunan Pakubuwana V 688
 Sunan Panggung 672
 Šūrati, Waṣī Aḥmad Muḥaddith 477, 476
 Surkati, Ahmad 717
 al-Sutūḥī 96
 al-Sutūḥī, Muḥammad 322
 al-Suʿūdī, ʿAbd al-Laṭīf 98, 118, 117,
 119
 al-Suwaydī, Tawfiq 295, 296, 298, 301,
 303
 al-Suwaydī, Yūsuf 302
 al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn 111, 112, 115,
 226, 240, 242, 245, 487
 Sy, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz 349
 Sy, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Jr. 354
 Sy, al-Ḥājj Malik 339, 344, 351, 352, 353
 Sy, Tidiane 345
 Syed, Jahan Anees 430
 Sylla, ʿAbd al-Qādir 327

 Tabaković, Ismet A. 642
 al-Ṭabarānī 29
 Taeschner, Franz 605
 Taftāzānī, A.W. 197
 al-Taftāzānī, Saʿd al-Dīn 96, 110, 113,
 119, 120
 al-Tahānawī 50
 al-Ṭāhir 326, 327

 Tahir, Ibrahim 357
 Tahir, Mohammad 21
 Ṭāhir Muḥammad Muḥaddith 427, 429
 Taḥmīd Allāh 685
 al-Ṭāʾī, Jamil 290
 Ṭāj al-Dīn b. Aḥmad 679
 al-Takrītī, Dāwūd 17
 al-Ṭalamankī, Abū ʿUmar b. Lubb 179,
 185, 187
 Ṭalāt 550
 Ṭalḥa 155
 Ṭālib al-Naqīb Pacha 293, 295, 298, 299,
 300, 301, 302, 308
 Ṭālibzāda, ʿAbd al-Raḥīm-i 630
 Tammār 72
 Tang Yanhe 571
 al-Ṭanjī, M.T. 203
 Ṭāshköprüzāde Aḥmed Efendi 606
 Ṭāshufin b. ʿAlī b. Yūsuf 186, 190
 Tātār Khān 418
 Tawḥīdipūr, Mahdī 498, 517
 al-Ṭawīl, Tawfiq 310, 317
 Taylor, Christopher S. 229
 Tayob, Abdul Kader 391
 al-Ṭayyib, Ṭayyib Muḥammad 270
 ter Haar, Johan 97
 Thackston, M.W. 545
 Thaiss, Gustav E. 290
 Thānesarī, Muḥammad Jaʿfar 474
 Thanesari, Jalāl 447
 Thanvi (Thānawī), Hadhrat Maulana
 Ashraf Ali 396, 404, 407, 412, 472,
 475
 Thomassen, Einar 268
 Thoraval, J. 595
 Tian Wu 572
 Tiernan, M. 243
 al-Tilimsānī, ʿAfif al-Dīn 98, 100, 101,
 116, 228, 233, 235
 Timur 41, 439, 605
 Titus, Murray 470
 Toffar, Abdul Kariem 408
 Tomero, E. 178, 179, 191
 Torre, Purificación de la 187
 Tōru, Saguchi 554
 Touati, H. 205
 Touré, Cheikh 10, 327, 328, 329, 342,
 344, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351,
 352, 354, 355
 Touré, Sérgne Hady 346
 Touwen-Bouwisma, Elly 728

- Traljić, Mahmud 655
 Triaud, Jean-Louis 337
 Trimingham, J. Spencer 147, 150, 229, 230, 332, 745
 Troll, Christian 2, 331, 416, 459, 460, 465, 466
 Tschudi, Rudolf 604
 Tuan Guru Sa'id (Said) 389, 390, 410, 411
 Tuan Haji Said 746
 Tuan Long Senik 746
 Tuan Nur al-Mubin 386, 389
 Tuan Tabal 741, 742, 743, 745, 748, 752, 755
 Tu'ayma, Şābir 94
 Tughluq Tınur Khan 551
 Tuk Wali Ismail 744, 747
 Tukku Paloh 740
 Tūlga 251
 al-Turābī, Ḥasan 268, 273, 276
 al-Turkumānī, Idris b. Baydakīn 202, 235
 al-Turṭūshī 185, 186, 191, 192, 193
 al-Tustari, Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh 3, 31, 52, 54, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 70, 118, 178, 179, 617, 620
 Tyan, E. 52

 ʿUbayd w. Badr 277, 279
 Ufak 641, 642
 Ulugh Beg 37
 ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Jabbār 710, 712
 ʿUmar al-ʿAydārūs 674
 ʿUmar b. ʿAbd Allāh Bā Shaybān al-Ṭarīmī al-Ḥaḍramī, Abū Ḥafṣ 674, 685 —> Sayyid ʿUmar al-ʿAydārūs, Bā Shaybān
 ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Maqdisi 106
 ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb 129, 360
 ʿUmar Khayyām, 635
 ʿUmar, Muḥammad 312, 313
 Umar, Muḥammad S. 10, 169, 357, 371, 374, 377, 384
 Umm al-Yumn 215
 Urvoy, D. 184, 186, 192, 193, 195
 al-ʿUryābī 188
 Usmanu b. Rājī 362
 ʿUthaymīn, ʿAbd Allāh 147, 154, 156, 157
 ʿUthmān al-ʿAlawī 20
 ʿUthmān b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAqīl b. Yaḥyā al-ʿAlawī, Sayyid ʿUthmān (Uthman bin Abdullah bin Akil bin Yahya Alawi, 701, 702, 703, 729, 754
 ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān 129, 149, 186, 281, 360, 580
 ʿUthmān b. Fūdi 324, 325, 332, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 363, 364, 369, 371, 379
 Uways al-Qaranī 517
 Uzun Ḥasan 37

 Valikhanov, Chokan Chingisovich 526
 Valikhudjaev, Botirkhon 538
 Vámbéry, Hermann 41
 van Bruinessen, Martin 20, 666, 701, 706, 711, 718, 719, 727, 728, 754
 van den Berg, L.W.C. 702, 710
 van Diffelen, Roelof W. 160
 van Dijk, Kees 728
 van Ess, Josef 2, 3, 4, 49, 51, 55, 67, 68, 69, 70, 90, 162, 163
 Vatikiotis, P.J. 313
 Veinstein, G. 9, 34, 38, 143, 307, 467, 534, 554, 660
 Verwoerd, H.F. 408
 Veth, P.J. 700
 Viatkin, V.L. 497
 Viguera, M.J. 187, 191, 195, 215
 Vikør, Knut S. 165, 170, 172, 281
 Villanueva, C. 201
 Vizcaíno, J.M. 185, 193
 Voll, John 148, 151, 627
 von de Wall, A.F. 711
 Voorhoeve, P. 674, 675, 678
 Vryonis, S. 203

 Wad al-ʿĀliya 279
 Wad Numayri 269
 Wahab, A.K. 402
 al-Wāḥidī 63
 Wajdi, Muḥammad Farid 314
 al-Wakil, ʿAbd al-Rahmān 321
 Waldman, Marilyn 524
 Wan Musa 755
 Wang 579, 580, 587, 589
 Wang Daiyu 553
 Wang Jingzhai 590
 Wang Lun 566
 Wang Wenqing 590
 Wang Yongliang 587

- al-Wansharisī, Aḥmad b. Yahyā 202,
208, 211, 214, 217, 218, 220, 221
al-Warāgli, H. 201, 202
Warburg, Gabriel R. 267, 317
al-Wardī, ʿAlī 289, 290, 295, 296, 298,
304, 305, 306
al-Warthilānī 263
al-Waryaghli, Abū ʿUthmān 216
Wāsil b. ʿAṭāʾ 67, 68
al-Wāsiṭī, Abū Bakr 54, 89, 617
Weipert, Reinhard 67
Weninger, Stefan 67
Wensinck, A.J. 50
Werfel, Franz 41
Westerland, David 1
White, Hayden 209
Wilāyat ʿAlī 466
Williams, C. 225, 229
Williman, Daniel 226
Willis, R. 361
Wilson, Arnold T. 301
Wilzer, S. 49
Wimbush, S. Enders 520, 524, 526, 527,
528, 529, 532, 534
Winstedt, R.O. 669, 673, 734, 738
Winter, T.J. 482
Wiryamartana 688
Woshikeng'e 570, 571
Wu Wanshan 573
Wuld Mūsā b. Jawʿān 149
Wüstenfeld, Ferdinand 417

Xinzhu 563, 572

Yaakob bin Haji Abdul Halim (Tuan
Padang), Haji 739
al-Yāfiʿi, ʿAfif al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh b.
Asʿad 107, 117, 129, 150
Yagi, Viviane Amina 272
Yahyā b. Ḥamza 6, 129, 130, 131, 132,
143
Yahyā b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Muʿayyad 134
Yahyā b. al-Mahdī b. Qāsim b.
Muṭahhar al-Zaydī al-Ḥusaynī 131,
132, 133
Yahyā b. Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-
Miqrāʾī 142
Yahyā b. Muḥammad al-Ṣāliḥī 127
Yahyā b. Mujaḥid b. ʿAwāna al-Fazārī
al-Ilbirī 184
Yahyā b. Yahyā al-Laythī 175

Yahyā Ḥamid al-Dīn 143
Yahyā al-Jallāʾ 73, 75
Yahyā, Osman 95, 96, 120, 122, 123,
619
Yahyā al-Shirāzi 70
al-Yamanī, Muḥammad 665
Yang Changjun 570, 571
Yang Huaizhong 561
Yang Huantai 568
Yang Huizi 560
Yaʿqūb b. al-Layth 59
Yaʿqūb Beg 545
Yaʿqūb al-Manṣūr 251
Yasin Padang (Yāsīn al-Fadānī) 710
Yazıcı, Tahsin 604, 609
Ye Chengzu 569
Ye Sishiwu 567
Yermakov, Dimitriy 527
Yinghuan 557
Yisimaer 598
Yoder, H.W. 186
Yongzheng 542
Yoshinobu, Nakada 556, 569
Young, M.J.L. 648
al-Yuḥānisī, Abū Marwān 197
Yumn b. Rizq al-Zāhid, Abū Bakr 176,
178, 179
Yūsuf b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar al-Kurdi
132
Yūsuf b. Yaʿqūb 250, 251
Yūsuf al-Hamadḥānī (Yūsuf-i
Hamadānī) 30, 532
Yūsuf Khāṣṣ Ḥājib 545
Yusuf, Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad
539
Yusuf of Faure 386, 389
Yūsuf, Prophet 360
Yūsuf Sinān Efendi 612
Yūsuf al-Taj al-Khalwati al-Maqasari
(Yusuf Makassar, Yusuf Makassarī,
Shaykh Yūsuf) —> al-Maqassārī

Zabāra, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad 134,
137
al-Zabīdī al-Murtaḍā 186
al-Zahāwī, Jamil Ṣidqī 306
al-Zahāwī, Muḥammad Fayḍī 304, 306
al-Zāhī, Muḥammad 216
Zāhīr al-Ḥaqq, Muḥammad 417
al-Zāhīr Yahyā 106
Zahraddeen, Muḥammad Sani 384

- Zain al-Din al-Sumbāwī 742, 743
 Zakariyya Sahib, Maulana Muḥammad
 396, 397, 402
 al-Zakzakī, Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad 385
 al-Zamakhsharī 132, 142
 Zanón, J. 191
 Zarccone, Th. 458, 460, 502, 538, 548,
 560, 758, 600, 697
 Zarkūb-i Shirāzī 78
 Zarrūq, Aḥmad 207
 al-Zawāwī, ʿIsā 108
 al-Zawāwī, Shaykh 266
 Zayd b. ʿAlī 125
 Zayd, Ṭāhā Aḥmad 135
 Zayn al-Abidin al-Qadiri, Hazrat 390
 el-Zein, Abdul Hamid 524
 Zhang Chengzhi 600
 Zhang Qunfang 561, 562, 572
 Zhe Zigou 583
 Zilfi, Madeleine 610
 al-Zirikli, Khayr al-Dīn 188
 Zubayda 27
 al-Zubaydī 179
 al-Zubayr 155, 283
 Ṣuhūr Ḥājjī Ḥuḍūr 419
 Zuo Zongtang 569, 571, 573
 Zwemer 389

2. PLACE NAMES

- Ābā Island 270
 Abīward 48, 54, 498
 Abū Qubays 709
 Abyāt Ḥusayn 105
 Aceh 19, 20, 666, 670, 672, 674, 675, 676, 678, 679, 701, 706, 750
 Acehnese Sultanate 669, 670, 675, 679
 ʿĀd 59
 Adamawa 362
 Afghanistan 579
 Africa 341
 Afrique
 — de l'Ouest 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 332, 334, 335, 337, 339
 — de l'ouest post-coloniale 338
 — du Nord 253
 — noire 649
 — occidentale 335
 — occidentale française 328
 Agra 423, 429, 440, 444, 445
 Ahmedabad 420, 419, 421, 422, 427, 431
 Aḥsāʾ 148, 151
 Ahwāz 79, 85
 Ajmer 448
 Albaicín 199
 Albania, Albanie 18, 19, 639, 640, 659, 660, 661, 662, 664
 Alep 115
 Alexandria, Alexandrie 119, 316
 Alger 254, 257, 258, 266
 Algeria, Algérie 5, 6, 41, 210, 249, 251, 253, 263, 327, 337, 707
 Alhambra 200
 Aligarh 417
 Allahabad 442
 Almería 182, 185, 186, 187, 188, 193, 250
 Altaï 542
 Altishahr 554, 558
 ʿAmāra 308
 America 410
 Amman 369
 Ampangan 743
 Anatolia, Anatolie 242, 305, 604, 606, 608, 610
 Andalus, Andalousie 4, 176, 177, 178, 180, 184, 185, 189, 199, 200, 201, 205, 208, 210, 211, 216, 248, 250
 Anding 562
 Ankang 582
 Ankara 609
 Annāba 259
 Aqsu 547, 551
 Arabia, Arabie, Arabian Peninsula 8, 43, 47, 57, 145, 147, 149, 150, 157, 159, 160, 332, 422, 425, 469, 474, 490, 678, 681, 707
 ʿĀriḍ 148, 149, 156, 157, 160
 Arrajān 79
 ʿArūs 138
 Asafi, Ribāṭ 212, 221
 Asia, Asie 13
 Asir 429
 ʿAsir 43, 147, 170, 758
 Athlone 390, 401, 410
 Awadh 453
 Ay-köl 551
 Azaadville 398
 Aʿẓamiyya 283
 Bāb al-Shaykh 293
 Bāb Zuwayla 152
 Bādis 212
 Baghdad 3, 4, 16, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 41, 48, 52, 55, 56, 57, 58, 61, 57, 69, 70, 72, 73, 74, 77, 78, 80, 83, 86, 210, 231, 283, 284, 289, 291, 292, 293, 296, 297, 298, 299, 301, 302, 303, 304, 306, 307, 308, 309, 369, 371, 392, 614, 619, 672
 Bahtīm 316
 Balkans 18, 19, 639, 662, 664
 Balkh 46, 500
 Bamako 337

- Banda Aceh 702
 Bangkok 731, 747
 Banjarmasin 700
 Bantam 388
 Bantenese Sultanate of West Java 681
 Banyumas 698, 699, 703
 Banyuwangi 699
 Baqqūya 216
 Basra 2, 26, 27, 47, 52, 54, 55, 59, 60,
 61, 62, 77, 86, 148, 151, 283, 291,
 292, 293, 295, 298, 299, 300, 301, 303
 Batavia 703, 711, 716, 721
 Bāward 498, 501
 Bayan 568
 Bayanrong 566
 Baybarsiyya Khānqāh 242
 Bayt ‘Aṭā’ 128
 Beijing 555
 Beirut 369
 Belgrade 659
 Bendbaša 644
 Bengal 419
 Berar 427
 Berber 270
 Bihar 444
 Bijāya, Bējaya 211, 251
 Bilād al-‘Anāb 260
 Bilād Madhḥij 134
 Blida 252
 Blue Nile 271
 Bombay 391, 392
 Borno 362, 371
 Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bosnie-
 Herzégovine 18, 640, 641, 642, 643,
 644, 645, 652, 653, 654, 655, 659,
 660, 662, 664
 Bosnie 642, 648
 Bougie 252
 Bridgetown 395
 British India 24
 Broach 421
 Buḥayra 313
 Buitenzorg 699
 Bukhārā, Bukhara 37, 498, 499, 524,
 537, 546, 547
 Bukhat al-Riḍā 372
 Bukittinggi 722
 Bulgarie 639, 640
 Būna 259
 Buntet 720, 721, 722
 Burhanpur 426, 427, 428, 429, 431
 Bursa 612, 639
 Buton 739
 Cabra 176
 Cachemire 287
 Cairo (Caire) 7, 31, 95, 96, 111, 151,
 225, 230, 243, 305, 344, 648
 Calcutta 419
 Calicut 105
 Canton 580
 Cape Town 390, 399, 402, 410, 411
 Caspian region 127, 128
 Caucasus 759
 Celebes 698, 740
 Central Asia 13, 41, 42, 492, 495, 506,
 515, 517, 518, 520, 521, 525, 526,
 527, 528, 529, 533, 537, 538, 540
 Central Sudan 269, 372
 Ceylan 302
 Chatsworth 394, 401
 Chechnia 528
 China, Chine 14, 15, 551, 552, 553, 554,
 556, 557, 570, 572, 576, 580, 582,
 588, 590, 591, 596, 597, 598, 599,
 600, 601, 730, 732
 Chunar 418
 Cianjur 702
 Cirebon 720, 722
 Comores, Comoros 390, 399, 758
 Constantine 255, 257, 259, 260, 264, 266,
 327
 Constantinople 371
 Córdoba 176, 178, 180, 181, 182, 186,
 189
 Côte d’Ivoire 328
 Croatie 659
 Cyrenaica 758
 Daghestan 526, 528
 Ḍaḥī 128
 Dakar 327, 342, 343, 344, 355
 Damascus (Damas) 30, 31, 38, 58, 94,
 111, 247, 305, 369, 616, 706
 Damāwand 54
 Dan’ger 568, 569, 573
 Darfur 272, 281, 282
 Datong county 566
 Daylam 131
 Daylamān 141
 Deccan 416, 442

- Delhi 306, 423, 444, 448, 449, 450, 454,
 456, 464, 465
 Demak 672, 696
 Denia 199
 Deoband 475
 Dhamār 127, 131, 133, 134, 139
 Didao 568
 Dimyāt 315
 Dir^ʿiyya 148, 157
 Djakovica 659
 Dobroudja roumaine 640
 Doha 678
 Dongguan 588, 589
 Dongola 269
 Dongxiang 579, 581, 584
 Durban 390, 392, 394, 395, 399, 400

 Edirne 606, 639
 Egypt (Egypte, Ägypten) 7, 17, 24, 36,
 42, 43, 47, 57, 58, 76, 77, 94, 97, 96,
 110, 112, 114, 158, 170, 217, 226,
 230, 231, 242, 267, 280, 291, 310,
 313, 315, 319, 321, 322, 325, 337,
 341, 546, 584, 693, 707
 Elbistān 243
 Elsie's River 390
 émirat de Muhammara 300
 England 24
 Erzinjān 38
 Euphrate 73, 283, 291
 Europe 633

 Fallāta 280
 Farghāna 547
 Fārs 78, 79
 Fass Touré 346
 Fathpur Sikri (Fatehpur-Sikri) 438, 440,
 441, 442, 445, 447, 448, 449
 Fatimid Ifrīqiyyā 208
 Ferghana valley 528, 533, 535
 Fez, Fès 209, 214, 216, 218, 220, 251
 France 24, 266, 328
 Fustāt 225
 Futa Jalon 325
 Futa Toro, Fuuta Tooro 325, 343

 Gabès 263
 Gaizigong 570
 Gandutang 566
 Ganges 454
 Gangetic basins 438

 Gansu 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 561,
 562, 565, 566, 568, 569, 570, 571,
 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 579,
 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 589,
 591, 596, 600
 Garut 702
 Gezira 274
 Ghaljat 547
 Ghana 331
 Gharchistān 34
 Ghiyaspur 448
 Ghulja 547
 Ghūr 34
 Gilān 141
 Gorée 342
 Gounas 353, 354
 Gowa 681
 Granada 198, 199, 200, 203, 204, 215
 Granadan kingdom 203
 Grande Muraille 542
 Grande-Bretagne 301, 302, 303, 307
 Grèce 639, 640
 Grey Street mosque 400
 Guadalest valley 199
 Guardamar 183
 Guinée 328
 Gujarat 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424,
 426, 438, 442, 666, 674
 Guoyuan 579
 Guyuan 586
 Gwalior 418, 420, 424
 Gwandu 362

 Ḥaḍramawt 674, 709, 710
 Hainan 595
 Ḥajja 134, 138
 Hami 582
 Haoussa 335
 Ḥaramayn 151, 157, 158, 160, 674, 677,
 682, 685, 706, 737, 743
 Has 659
 Ḥasā 296
 Hausaland 361, 371
 Haute Volta 328
 Helan 586, 595
 Henan 573, 589, 592
 Herat 29
 Hezhou 561, 563, 565, 566, 568, 569,
 571, 579
 High Atlas mountains 211

- Hījāz 150, 157, 158, 160, 231, 273, 278,
 481, 416, 422, 481, 705, 706, 720
 Hijrat al-Awṭān 134
 Hijrat al-Waṣḥal 133
 Hijrat ʿArām 133
 Hijrat Ḥasan Salmān 132
 Hijrat Maʿbar 133
 Hilla 289
 Hindustan 421
 Hong Kong 596
 Hongrie 639
 Huangzhong 587
 Hubei 580, 589
 Hūdayda 143
 Hulu Trengganu 741
 Ḥuraymilāʾ 148
 Hūth 133
 Huwayza 289
 Hyderabad 392

 Iberian Peninsula 175
 igelliden 211
 Imi-n-Tānūt 211
 India, Indian Subcontinent, Inde, 11, 12,
 97, 105, 269, 287, 306, 331, 390, 391,
 392, 396, 397, 403, 406, 410, 412,
 422, 436, 438, 453, 454, 458, 464,
 465, 466, 474, 674, 676, 706, 730, 732
 Indies, Dutch 21
 Indo-Pakistani Subcontinent 398
 Indonesia, Indonésie, Indonesien 20, 97,
 696, 703, 705, 706, 709, 719, 720,
 725, 728, 735, 755
 Irak, Iraq 16, 41, 47, 57, 79, 283, 288,
 289, 290, 291, 293, 295, 296, 299,
 301, 302, 303, 306, 307, 308, 304,
 579, 580
 Iran 23, 29, 36, 37, 39, 42, 47, 97, 284,
 287, 288, 289, 291, 409, 410, 444,
 579, 604, 619, 623, 631, 635, 637
 Isfahan, Iṣfahān 16, 29, 285, 626
 Israel 410
 Istanbul 93, 298, 550, 607, 609, 639
 Ityāy al-Barūd 313
 Izmir 610

 Jahrān 133
 Jakarta 716
 Jalalabad 396
 Jalawlāʾ 307
 Jambu 744

 Java 19, 388, 666, 671, 672, 668, 677,
 696, 701, 707, 708, 709, 716, 717,
 719, 720, 721, 727, 733, 738, 739, 740
 Jedda 678
 Jemen 170
 Jerusalem 57, 187, 371, 672, 744
 Jidda 466
 Jil 131
 Jilla 188
 Jiza 57
 Johannesburg 390, 391

 Kabylie 252, 258
 Kaduna 373, 377
 Kairo 743, 744, 750
 Kalyān 391
 Kambodscha 741
 Kampung Sena Janjar 744
 Kano 362, 363, 364, 368, 369, 370, 372,
 376, 378
 Karbala, Karbalāʾ 2, 286, 287, 289, 300,
 302, 306, 307, 627
 Kashgaria, Kashghar, Kāshghar 546,
 547, 559, 550, 551, 758
 Kashmir 2, 442, 454
 Kassala 277
 Katagum 371
 Kazakhstan 42, 524, 538
 Kazan 522
 Kāzimayn 289
 Kedah 711, 721, 731, 741, 742, 743, 747
 Kelantan 730, 731, 732, 737, 738, 741,
 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748,
 750, 751, 754, 755
 Kermān 287
 Khālīṣ 307
 Khandaq 269
 Khartoum 280
 Khorasan, Khurasan 27, 29, 33, 47, 54,
 64, 287
 Khorezm 498, 500, 501, 505, 514, 528
 Khotan 545, 546, 547, 548
 Khubbān (?) 133
 Khuttalān 47
 Khuzār 500
 Khūzistān 632
 Kingri 759
 Kirgiz SSR 528
 Kirkuk 293, 307
 Kirmānshāh 623
 Kokki 343

- Kordofan 271, 274, 278, 273
 Kosovo 18, 640, 641, 645, 646, 650, 651,
 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 659,
 662, 663, 664
 Kota Bharu 731, 741, 743, 744, 748
 Koweit 300, 596
 Kracak 722
 Kuala Lumpur 731
 Kufa 48, 64
 Kūkū 255
 Kurdistan 283, 306
 Kutrānj 270
 Köne Ürgench 498
- Ladysmith 391
 Lāhijān 127
 Lahj 1
 Lahore 472
 Lanzhou 561, 563, 564, 571, 572, 594,
 599
 Laohekou 580
 Lebanon 409
 Lengkong 697
 Libyen 166
 Linxia 579, 581, 582, 583, 584, 595, 596,
 598, 602
 Lower-Egypt 57
- Ma^cbar 133
 Macedonia, Macédoine 18, 640, 641,
 646, 650, 651, 652, 653, 655, 656,
 659, 662, 664
 Madura 696, 718
 Maghreb, Maghrib 184, 187, 193, 200,
 210, 211, 212, 213, 218, 248, 249,
 250, 251, 253, 325, 332, 729
 Maḥallat al-faḍl 308
 Maḥallat al-^cizza 308
 Mahjam 128
 Ma^ckāl 149
 Málaga 200, 212
 Malakka 732, 750
 Malay-Indonesian Archipelago 19, 665,
 668, 677, 680, 685, 686
 Malaya 729, 735, 736, 737, 739, 740,
 741, 743, 749, 750, 756
 Malaysia 20, 21, 730, 731, 755, 756
 Mali 328, 337
 Manbij 76
 Manṣūra 315
 Marrakesh 184, 187, 189, 211
- Marw 48, 54, 70
 Māsa 274
 Masallāmiyya 271
 Maṣna^cat Banī Qays 131, 133
 Mataram 672, 689
 Mauretania 343
 Mauritius 390
 Mecca, Mecque, Mekka 9, 46, 48, 53,
 56, 57, 58, 89, 129, 131, 142, 147,
 148, 150, 160, 170, 255, 268, 279,
 325, 337, 362, 363, 368, 371, 386,
 388, 389, 390, 391, 397, 414, 423,
 429, 440, 47, 454, 455, 462, 466, 469,
 490, 559, 570, 579, 580, 581, 617,
 665, 666, 672, 678, 684, 693, 701,
 705, 706, 709, 710, 712, 715, 718,
 721, 741, 742, 743, 744, 747, 750, 751
 Medina (Médine) 9, 93, 148, 150, 213,
 215, 392, 396, 414, 440, 455, 458,
 469, 482, 484, 490, 672, 678, 705,
 706, 720, 721, 706
 Medjana 258
 Melaka 669
 Menado 698
 Mértola 189
 Mésopotamie 288, 295, 541
 Mila 265
 Minangkabau 750
 Mishrāq 293
 Moghūliyya 548
 Moluccas 708
 Mongolia, Mongolie 542, 553, 554
 Monigou 581
 Moroccan Rif 212
 Morocco, Marokko, Maroc 5, 21, 168,
 170, 209, 210, 211, 212, 216, 250,
 254, 331
 Mostaghanem 258
 Mosul 291, 293
 Mount Qāf 59
 Multan 470
 Mungka 713
 Murcia 189
- Nadhrouma 254
 Nadkovačima 644
 Najaf 16, 289, 300, 627
 Najd, Nejd 147, 148, 149, 151, 304, 481
 — Central 157, 160
 Nakhshab 500
 Nasaf 500

- Natal 389, 392, 397, 401, 402
 Negri Sembilan 742, 743, 745, 755
 Nēshāpūr 33, 34, 36
 Niebla 190
 Niger 334
 Nigeria, Nigéria 327, 329, 334, 337, 338,
 339, 341, 357, 358, 362, 366, 369,
 371, 372, 373, 375, 381, 382
 Nile Valley 267
 Ningxia 569, 582, 583, 585, 590, 591,
 592, 593, 594, 595, 597, 598, 599, 600
 Nord
 — du Nigéria, Northern Nigeria 268,
 329, 333, 339, 357, 368, 370, 371, 382
 Nordsumatra 750
 — Africa 58, 187, 369, 375
 — and Central Sumatra 725
 — Caucasus 526, 528
 — India 444, 454
 North-West Frontier 454
 Northern
 — and Northeastern Caucasus region
 535
 — India 416, 423
 — Nigeria 268
 Northwest China 14, 559, 565

 Omdurman 277, 279
 Orahovac 659
 Oran 252, 253
 Orenburg 523, 546
 Orissa 442
 Oudekraal 389
 Oxus 47

 Pahang Sultanate 669
 Pakistan 390, 391, 395, 402, 456, 464,
 472, 474, 601
 Pakpattan 470
 Palembang 682
 Palestine 57, 58, 409
 Pamijahan 738
 Panipat 418
 Panjab (Punjab) 438, 442, 445, 453, 454,
 469, 470, 474, 479
 Pasir Wetan 698
 Patani 684, 731, 732, 737, 742, 744, 751,
 752
 Patna 466
 Pechina 182, 185
 Pékin 585, 592, 596

 Penang 711
 Perlis 731, 747
 Persia, 198, 284
 Persian Gulf region 678
 Peshawar 454
 Pietermaritzburg 390
 Pir 343
 Plateau de Loess 543
 Port Elizabeth 396
 Portugal 188
 Pretoria 390
 Prizren 654, 659
 Pulau Manis 737
 Purwakarta 699

 Qalʿa des Banū Rāshid 252
 Qandahar 478
 Qāra 133
 Qarshī 500
 Qashqa-Daryā valley 500
 Qayrawān 58
 Qazwīn 64, 632
 Qinghai 579, 581, 582, 583, 585, 587,
 589, 593
 Qinghai Ningxia Hui Autonomous
 Region 554
 Qingshui 562, 563
 Qum 614

 Rae Bareilly 453, 454
 Raḥbat Tawq 73
 Rajasthan 438, 445, 454
 Rāmḥurmuz 79
 Rāmītan 498, 501
 Rānīr (Randir) 674, 676
 Raqqa 55
 Rās al-Māʾ 252
 Rasht 127
 Rāstīpūra 428
 Riau 711, 741, 753
 Riebeeck Square Market 390
 Rif 251
 Rif marocain 248
 Rif mountains 216
 al-Riyāḍ 149
 Robben Island 390, 394
 Roumanie 639, 640
 Roumélie 608
 Rufisque 342
 Russia 38, 41, 521
 Rylands Estate 394, 402

- Sabta 212
 Šabyā 170
 Ša'da 127, 131, 133, 134, 138
 Sahara 325
 Sa'id al-Su'adā° 230
 Saksyūwa 211
 Šalāhiyya 230
 Salar country 560, 562, 564, 566, 569,
 571, 572, 573, 574
 Salé 210, 220
 Samarkand, Samarqand 37, 48, 495, 497
 Sāmarrā° 57, 299, 307, 308
 Šan'ā° 127, 133
 Sāni Karaw 272
 Sarajevo 18, 639, 642, 643, 644, 645,
 646, 648, 654, 655, 664
 Saudi Arabia 29, 43, 373, 378, 393, 409,
 414
 Segu 362
 Senegal, Sénégal 329, 332, 338, 339,
 341, 342, 344, 345, 346, 347, 349,
 350, 351, 354, 355, 757
 Sénagambie 325, 326
 Serbia, Serbie 18, 646, 656
 — du Sud 645
 Seremban 743
 Seville, Séville 187, 248
 Shaanxi 566, 569, 571, 573, 575, 581,
 582, 586, 597
 Shandong 566, 573, 575
 Shanghai 585, 589, 590
 Shikarpur 481
 Shiraz 4, 33, 71, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 432
 Shizuishan 594, 595
 Siam 731, 747, 750
 Sichuan 569, 583, 589, 599
 Šiffin 125
 Signal Hill 386
 Sijistan 47
 Silves 189
 Sind 442, 478, 479, 481
 Singapore, Singapur 711, 747, 750
 Siniyyat al-Karkh 75
 Skoplje 18, 646
 Smyrne 264
 Snāssen 254
 Sokoto 275, 326, 362, 363, 364, 369, 371,
 373, 758
 Soudan 326, 601 —> see also Sudan
 — central 338
 — occidental 332, 338
 South
 — Africa 12, 13, 387, 391, 392, 393,
 397, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405,
 409, 412, 413, 415
 — Asia 437, 440, 453
 — Asian subcontinent 416
 — Kalimantan 20, 685
 — Sulawesi 681
 — Sumatra 682
 — Thailand 684
 South West Tajikistan 536
 Southeast Asia 20, 416
 southern Kazakhstan 528
 Soviet Central Asia 534, 536, 540
 Soviet Union 527, 529
 Spain 212
 Sri Lanka 687
 St. Louis 342
 St. Petersburg 497
 Stellenbosch 402
 Sudan 8, 40, 166, 267, 275, 279, 317, 372
 Sukabumi 702
 Sulaymaniyah 293
 Sumatra 709, 712, 740, 741
 Surabaya 718
 Surakarta 688, 692
 Surat 676
 Süs valley 211, 212
 Suzhou 569
 Swellendam 389
 Südthailand 741
 Syria (Syrie) 17, 44, 46, 47, 57, 110, 112,
 114, 158, 231, 242, 291
 Tabriz 631
 Ṭā'if 150
 Taiwan 599
 Ta'izz 127, 133, 143
 Tajikistan 528
 Tangerang 250
 Ṭanṭā 95
 Tarim 542
 Tarsus 73
 Tashkent 37, 497, 524, 525, 530, 539
 Téhéran 306
 Tell 257
 Thulā 133
 Tibet 553, 554, 568, 583
 Tigre 283, 291
 Tihāma 127
 Tikrit 307, 308

- Tīt-n-Fitr 212
 Titteri 257
 Tivaouane 349, 352
 Tizi-n-Test pass 211
 Tlemcen 210, 251, 252, 254
 Tongguan 571
 Tongxin 602
 Tonk 454
 Toubā 349, 352
 Transoxania 507, 509, 510, 513, 515
 Transvaal 389, 396, 397, 399, 402
 Trengganu 731, 737, 740, 747
 Tripolitania, 40
 Tudela 176
 Tūkh 316
 Tunis 251
 Tunisie 263
 Tūrfan 542
 Turkestan 541
 — oriental 544, 550, 551, 552, 576
 Turkey, Turquie 42, 474, 550, 759
 Turkic Central Asia 554
 Turkmenistan 498, 528, 531, 532, 535
 Turkmenistan 532
 Tustar 59, 85
 Tutrakan 640

 Ufa 523
 Uitenhage 399
 Umm al-malāzim 257
 Umm Ḍubbān 279
 Umzinto 397
 Urgench 528
 Urumqi 561
 Ushaq-tal 544
 Uttar Pradesh 445
 ʿUyayna 148
 Uzbekistan 533, 537, 538

 Valencia 186, 190
 vallée d'Ili 547
 vilayet de Basra 296
 vilayet de la Mésopotamie 291, 293
 vilayets mésopotamiens 288, 297
 Volga-Ural region 759

 Wādi Surdud 128
 Wādi Zubayd 133
 Wādi'l-Ḥār 131, 132
 Wa'ra 133
 Wāshgird 47

 Washington 410
 Wāsīt 55
 Weizhou 594
 West
 — Africa 10, 11, 165, 341, 368, 369, 758
 — Java 20, 697, 701, 702, 711
 — Sumatra 700, 713, 716, 722, 750
 Western
 — India 416, 438
 — Panjab 470
 Westridge 400
 White Nile 271
 Wynberg 402

 Xining 568, 569, 570, 573, 581, 582, 583,
 584, 587, 589, 594, 599
 Xinjiang 543, 550, 551, 553, 554, 557,
 558, 562, 574, 576, 582, 593
 Xi'an 581, 582
 Xunhua 555, 558, 560, 561, 563, 568,
 570, 571, 574, 584

 Yafrus 143
 Yangzi 569
 Yarkand 545, 546, 547, 551
 Yellow River 555
 Yemen (Yémen) 6, 7, 59, 105, 106, 116,
 125, 126, 127, 128, 131, 133, 134,
 139, 141, 143, 466, 559, 678, 681
 Yettā-shahr 548
 Yinchuan 595, 599
 Yogyakarta 716
 Yougoslavie 18, 639, 640, 641, 649, 651,
 657, 659, 662, 664
 Yunnan 573, 590

 Zabid 108, 127
 Zafār 133
 Zahrāyn 138ṭ
 Zanjān 632
 Zaria 362
 Zentralasien 729

3. CONCEPTS

- abangan* 707, 726
‘abd 102
abdāl 73, 75
abka 542
abrār 50
adab 481
‘ādat, adat 469, 707, 712, 715, 707
adhkār 277
adhwāq ahl al-‘irfān wa’l-tawhīd 236
‘adl 89
After-Breakers (houkai) 555, 556
aḥkām al-takfīr wa’l-tafsīq 137
aḥkām Allāh al-ḡāhira 207
ahl al-bāṭin wa’l-ḥaqīqa 275
ahl al-ḥall wa’l-‘aqd 208
ahl al-ibāḥa 25, 612
ahl al-malāma 126
ahl al-ma‘rifa 50
ahl al-nazẓār 88
ahl al-sharī‘a 249
ahl al-tarīqa 131
ahl al-taṣawwuf 31
ahl Allāh 275
ahong 556, 574, 577, 579
aḥwāl 333
aiḥeli sunnai 581
a‘immat al-hudā 219
‘ajam 254
ajaran sesat 755
akhlāq 666
ākhund 556
‘alā ṣūratihī 26
‘ālam al-amr 483
‘ālam al-khayāl 108
al-‘ālam huwa Allāh, huwa al-‘ālam 675
alastu bi-rabbikum 58, 60s
alf 440
‘ālim 193, 194, 196, 205, 219, 258, 261, 622
aliran kebatinan 727
allāhu shāhidī 60
‘amal 5, 207, 213, 215, 224
‘amal ijtihādī 213
‘amal-dārān 513
āmīn bi’l-jahr 474
‘amma 152, 185
al-amr bi’l-ma‘rūf 193
al-amr bi’l-ma‘rūf wa’l-nahy ‘an al-munkar 55, 92
‘amūd al-nūr 61
‘an 49
anā 60
anā rabbukum al-a‘lā 60
ana’l-ḥaqq 621, 672
anbiyā’ 51
al-anwār al-muḥammadiyya 380
‘aql 287
al-‘aql al-awwal 103
ār-ō bar 507
‘ārifs, ‘ārifūn 57, 620
al-‘ārifūn bi-aḥkām Allāh 194
al-‘ārifūn bi’llāh 194
arwāḥ 42
arzāq 86
‘aṣabiyya 199
aṣl al-‘adl 78
āsmān 542
‘awāmm 50
‘awānān wa ‘awān-parastān 513
awba 51
awliyā’ 53, 165, 207, 208, 361, 366, 370, 380, 381, 382, 481, 483, 484, 485, 615, 619
awliyā’ Allāh 51, 152, 208, 363, 389
awtād 489
āya muḥkama 488
āyāt 32, 91
al-a‘yān al-khārijīyya 680
‘ayn thābita, al-a‘yān al-thābita 104, 665, 680
‘azm 275
āyat al-kursī 239
badhl al-rūḥ 126

- baraka, barakat* 153, 159, 229, 238, 239, 248, 347, 357, 360, 361, 386, 445, 482, 486, 512, 733, 734
barīd 133
barzakh 159, 485
baṣṣī 500
bāṭin 64, 668
bayʿa, bayʿat, baiʿat 52, 552, 482, 508, 509
belum berakal 743
berlagak seperti sufi 684
bhaktas 473
bidʿa, bidʿah, bidaʿ 10, 11, 28, 202, 222, 262, 314, 317, 343, 354, 371, 377, 380, 381, 383, 403, 456, 457, 459, 461, 579, 610, 613, 730, 754
bidʿa dzalala 752
bidʿa ḥasana 473, 752
bilā kayf 377
al-buqʿa al-tāhira 276
burhān 137
bushrā 164
but-parastī 460
būbi 551

džahil 657
dajjālūn 260
ḍalāl 123
dalīl ʿamm 473
dānish 633, 634
daotang 577
darāhim al-qudra 85
darbar 439
dargāh 392
dast-i irādat 510
datong 542
daʿwa 404
dawsa 311
deverān 611
dhabḥ 154
dhākir 504
dhanb 49
dhāt 684
dhāt Allāh 692
dhawq 234
dhikr, dzikir, zikr 38, 58, 60, 132, 133, 134, 152, 199, 201, 204, 236, 239, 271, 305, 309, 313, 335, 347, 366, 367, 370, 387, 398, 479, 496, 502, 503, 504, 506, 508, 525, 536, 551, 557, 565, 572, 575, 577, 578, 678, 679, 644, 646, 647, 650, 651, 653, 654, 663, 709, 710, 712, 713, 714, 716, 724, 730, 739, 743, 744, 745, 748, 751, 752, 753, see also General Index
dhikr allāh 391, 411
dhikr Allāh bi'llāh 60
al-dhikr bi'l-madhkur 60
dhikr nafi wa-iḥbāt 723
dhikr-i ʿamm 504
dhikr-i khāṣṣ 504
dhikr-i khāṣṣ al-khawāṣṣ 503
dhull 275
dhunūb 49
dil bā yār wa tan ba bāzār 507
dīn 633, 634
duʿā 154, 240, 406, 486, 578
dujjāl 259
dukun 734
duwayra ṣūfiyya 2

fakhr 432
falsafa 16, 98, 105, 107, 118, 284
fanāʾ 3, 164
al-fanāʾ fi'l-shaykh 40
al-fanāʾ wa'l-baqāʾ 58
fann al-karāmāt 221
fanzuo 555, 561
faqih 187, 193, 194, 205, 208, 218, 219, 220, 221, 223, 224
faqīr 208, 218, 219, 220, 224, 261
faqr 241, 408
farāʾid 102
farḍ 481
farḍ ʿayn 549
farīda ʿādila 488
fāsiq, fussāq 126, 358, 614
fatā 73
fayaḍān 365
farḍ 365, 472, 484
farḍa 365, 366, 367
fidya 578
fiqh 4, 151, 156, 188, 191, 196, 197, 207, 212, 213, 221, 222, 223, 358, 380, 383, 546, 627, 665, 666, 670, 674, 676, 680
fiqh al-bāṭin 222
fiqh al-muʿāmalāt 223
fiqh al-waraʿ 222
fiqh al-zāhir 222
fīma, fitanhā 89, 177

- fi'l-ʿādāt* 461
fi'l-ʿibādāt 461
fi'l-ʿilm 461
fi'l-taṣarruf 461
Fore-Breakers (qiankai) 555, 556
fuqahāʾ al-zāhir 221
fuqarāʾ 189, 215
furqān 170
futuwwa 73
fuyūd wa-barakāt 484
al-fuyūdāt al-rabbāniyya 370

Gedimu 554, 559, 565, 576
ghawth 256, 360
ghawth al-zamān 367
ghayb 90
ghaybat 624, 625
ghaybat-i ṣughrā 614
ghayr 81
ghayr muqallid 487
ghāzī 549
ghuluww 289
ghurūr 130
al-ghusl li'l-tawba 724
gongbei 577
gyārhwīn 475

ḥādīr wa-nāzīr 12, 472
ḥadīth 48, 55, 164, 193
ḥadīth al-ʿishq 27
ḥadra, ḥadarāt 274, 275, 305, 310, 321, 334, 367, 368
ḥadra ilāhiyya 366
hāhūt 368
ḥakīm 204
ḥāl 236, 358, 510, 511, 531
ḥalāl 262
halqa-e-dhikr, Halqa-e-zikr 390, 411
ḥaqīqa 19, 207, 358, 383, 507, 515, 531, 673
ḥaqīqa aḥmadiyya 366
ḥaqīqa muḥammadiyya 7, 103, 104, 366
ḥaqq 128
ḥarām 262
ḥarb 275
al-ḥarb ṣabr 279
hawājis 83
hawas 85
hayi 588
haylala 721
ḥayra 113

ḥazn 275
ḥifẓ 389
hijra 132, 125, 133, 255, 274
hikayat 668
ḥikma, ḥikmat 269, 620
ḥikmat-i mutaʿāliya 620, 621
ḥirfa 512, 513, 514
hodža 643, 644
Hu ("Lui") 654, 656
Hubbe Rasool 407
hubs 200
ḥudūr 6, 239, 240, 242, 489
ḥujjat Allāh 60
ḥulūl 85, 90, 101, 119, 141, 198, 232, 658
ḥulūliyya 232
hūsh dar dam 507
huwa al-qayyūm, huwa al-qayyūm, allāh al-qayyūm 271
Hyang Agung 692

ʿibāda 126, 154, 670
ʿibādāt al-aṣnām 153, 155
ibāha 34
ibāhī 82
ibāna wa-takḥṣīṣ 91
al-idhn al-muṭlaq 376
iḥāfa 681
iḥsān 358, 359, 378, 379, 383, 452
iʿjāz 33
ijāza 34, 318, 508, 514
ijmāʿ 115, 122, 213, 370, 488
ijtihād 213, 224, 276, 287, 466, 487, 626
ikhḷāfāt 82
ikhḷāṣ 68
ikhḷāf 626
ilhād 668
ilhām 4, 83, 234, 313
ʿilm 5, 113, 194, 196, 221, 222, 224, 631
ʿilm al-bāṭin 164, 177, 678
ʿilm al-daqaʾiq 679
ʿilm al-ghayb, ʿilm-i ghayb 195, 472
ʿilm al-ḥadīth 175
ʿilm al-ḥaqāʾiq 668, 678
ʿilm al-khiraq 87
ʿilm al-muʿāmalāt 222
ʿilm al-mukāshafāt 222
ʿilm al-sharīʿa 668
ʿilm al-tawḥīd 191
ʿilm al-uṣūl 216
ʿilm al-waraq 87
ʿilm al-zāhir 163

- ‘ilm Allāh al-sābiq* 61
ilmi tesavvuf 644
ilmu 738
ilmu martabat tujuh 739
ilmu pitu 739
ilmu Satariyah 739
imām al-awliyā’ 360
Imām Bakhsh 480
imām ma’šūm 188
īmān 102
imtizāj 81, 82
ināba 51, 154
indhār 274
indirās al-islām 274
inkār 494
inkisār 275
inorodtsy 521
al-inqibād ‘an al-sulṭān 175
al-insān al-kāmil 330, 666, 699, 738
irāda, irādat 61, 125, 126, 508, 509, 510, 516, 518
‘irfān 16, 620, 621
irjā’ 133
īshān 41
ishārāt al-sā‘a 272
ishq 607
‘ishq 3, 27, 68, 192, 195
al-ishrāk fi’l-‘ādāt 480
al-ishrāk fi’l-‘ibāda 480
al-ishrāk fi’l-‘ilm 472
al-ishrāk fi’l-taṣarruf 483
iṣlāḥ 17, 311, 314, 318, 469
ism Allāh al-a‘zam 333
ism al-laṭīf 390
‘iṣma 61, 124, 195
isnād 63
iṣrār 50
istighātha 154, 483
istighfār 154, 240
istighwā’ 84
istimḍād 486
istiqāma 219
al-i‘timād ‘alā ‘llāh 275
al-i‘tiqād fi’l-anbiyā’ wa’l-ṣāliḥīn 153
al-i‘tiqād fi’l-ṣāliḥīn 153
i‘tizāl 181
itifiq al-qawl 275
itiḥād 119, 141, 198, 232, 244, 615, 616, 684
jabarūt 368
jawāmi‘ 264
jawāz 208
Jayengresmi 689
jhāruka darshān 439
jiaofei 573
jiazu 559
al-jidāl fi āyāt Allāh 181
jihād 53
jiaopai 576
kabīra 211
kāfir, kuffār 326, 616, 677
kāhin 177
kalimat al-shahāda 360
kāmil wa-mukammil 483, 488
karāmāt 4, 6, 81, 83, 91, 131, 198, 208, 238, 256, 257, 258, 313, 357, 360, 361, 370, 561, 547, 658
karāmāt al-awliyā’ 183
kasb-i kamāl 512
kashf 236, 245, 357, 361, 406
kaum 689
kaum muda 714, 750
kaum yang bersufi-Sufian dirinya 684
kawn dukka 367, 368
kebatinan 708
keramet → *karāma*
khalaf 82
khalīfa 367, 388
khalwa, khalawāt 270, 332, 496, 508, 713
khalq al-qur‘ān 72, 76
khalwat dar anjuman 507
khānqāh, khānaqāh, khānqāhs 6, 22, 31, 78, 229, 230, 231, 234, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 392, 405, 494, 500, 503, 505, 510, 511, 515, 516, 518, 523, 536, 537, 620
khānqāh-dār 511
khānawāda 507, 508
khānawāda of ‘Bring and take’ 507
khārij 684
khārij-i ‘āda 547
khāṣṣ al-khawwāṣ 681
khāṣṣa 152
khaṭarāt 83
khāṭirāt 81
khatm al-awliyā’ 366
khatm al-walāya 7, 103, 171, 366
khatm al-walāya al-muḥammadiyya 365
khatm-i khwājagān 713
khawāriq-i ‘ādāt 498

- khawāṣṣ* 50
khawf 154, 333
khidhlān 61
khidma 175
khilāfa 392, 508
khirqā 30, 31, 133, 504, 508, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 518
khirqat al-futuwwa 31
khshwarena 439
kufr 50, 58, 63, 118, 123, 137, 153, 154, 159, 202, 358, 374, 458, 622, 677, 684
kufr kāfir 93
kuntu sam'ahu 107
kutb 658, see also *qutb*
- lāhūt* 85, 368
laṭāfat 489
laṭā'if 713, 723
lāzim 330, 334
lazna 257
li (supplementary statutes) 557
lü 557
- maḥāsīd* 359
maḥabba 2, 27
maḥalla 535
mahdī 8, 177, 178, 187, 273, 619, 453, 454, 467, 619, 700
al-mahdī al-muntaẓar 273
ma'iyya 681
majālis 276
majdhūb 743, 745, 748, 749, 752
majlā ilāhī 102
malakūt 368
manṭiq 666
maqāla 123
maqām, *maqāmāt* 53, 129
ma'rifa 2, 57, 673, 690
marja'iyya 309
marji' al-taqlīd 16, 289, 302
martabat tujuh 667, 682, 685, 698, 738, 744
maṣāliḥ 359
mashā'ikh 436, 437
mashyakha 312, 317, 318, 321
mashyakhat al-furuq al-ṣūfiyya 314, 322
mashī'a 61
mashrab 434
ma'ṣiya 50
matem 657
ma'ūna 61
- mawjūd* 692
al-mawjūd al-ḥaqīqī 681
al-mawjūd al-majāzī 681
mawlid al-nabī 198
Meelad 395
menhuan 559, 570, 576, 584, 591
menhuan de l'Œuf 600
menhuan du Poisson 600
Messenger of the Fāṭimī, Rasūl al-Fāṭimī 212
miḥna 3, 4, 57, 71, 72, 73, 75, 77, 78, 106, 108
min 49
Mingshahui (Bright Sand Societies) 556
mi'rāj 11, 419, 484
miznār 135
mu'āmala 114, 125
mubtadi', mubtadi'ūn 259, 260
mudabbirāt 483
mudda'i al-rubūbiyya 614
muḥaddith 193
muḥaqqiq 197
muḥāsabat al-nafs 51
muḥibbūn 113
muhlikāt 359
muhtasib 27
muhtasib al-ṣūfiyya 207
mujāb al-da'wa 177
mujādala 88
mujaddid 273, 471
mujāhada 52, 126, 249
mujāhid 204
mujāwir 48
mu'jiza 4, 91, 92
mujtahid 16, 289, 624, 626
mukabela 644
mukhtaṣarāt 212
mulḥid, malāhida 107, 108, 132, 681
mu'minūn 51
munāfiqūn 66, 259
munāsabat 491
munjiyāt 359
muntaẓar 212
muqarrabūn 50
murāba'a 249
al-murabbī al-nāsiḥ 223
murāqaba 51
murīd 53, 125, 126, 159, 361, 367, 508, 536, 724
murshid 159, 460, 460
murtadd-i ṭarīqa 508

mushāhada 52
mustahabb 482
mustahlikūn 113
mutafranjīyyūn 313
mutamahdī 280
mutaṣarrif 296
al-mutaṣawwif al-raqqāṣ al-ṣaffāq 136
mutih 699

nabī 103, 116
nadhr 154
nafas 61
nāfir ʿāmm 549
nafs 61
nafs al-rūḥ 61
nafs al-ṭabʿ 61
nafsī wāḥidī lā sharīka lahu lā ilāha illā ana 698
nafy-iḥbāt 699
al-nāʾib al-ʿāmm 285
nam mkha 542
namak-khurda 544
naqīb 292, 293, 295
naqīb al-ashraf 293, 295, 303
nār 616
nāsūt 368
nawāfil 102
nawāqid al-Islām 377
naẓar bar qadam 507
ngelmu 738
nisab 121
nisbat 489
niyya 714
niẓām-ı ʿālem 608, 613
nöker 513
novyi sovetskii chelovek 523
nubuwat 458
nūkarān-i ḥākimān 513
nūr 616
al-nūr al-muḥammadī, nūr-i muḥammadī
 12, 19, 313, 472
nūr Muḥammad 3, 61, 680, 708
nussāk 183

pākdīn 634
Perfect Man 439, 625, 628, 630, 631, see
 also *al-insān al-kāmil*
Perfect Shiite 628, 629, 630, 631
pekauman 699
penghulu 20, 689, 690, 696, 698, 702,
 703, 703

perezhitki 531
ping Jing li jia 578
Pir Bakhsh 480
pīr-i bayʿat 509
pīr-i irādat 509, 510

qabar puja 406
qabḍ 370, 377
qabḍ-sadl 370
qaḍā 104
qadar 89
qadīm 576, 577, 578, 582, 585, 586, 587,
 593, 594, see also *Gedimu*
Qadirawan Shehu 361
qalam 103
qānūn 632
qillat al-sharāb 275
qillat al-ṭaʿām 275
qiyās 487
qūt 60
quṭb 361, 376, 611, 666
quṭb al-aqtāb 365
al-quṭb al-aʿzam 363
quṭb/ghawth 374
quṭbāniyya 376

rābiṭa 40, 159, 183, 188, 460, 461
al-rābiṭa bi'l-shaykh 713, 714
rafʿ al-yadayn 474
rafḍ 138
raghba 154
rāh-zan-i ṭarīqa 507
rahba 154
rajāʾ 154, 333
rajyābhiseka 439
raqs 217, 494, 496, 506, 516, 611
raqs ve deverān 610, 611
rātīb 277, 278, 282, 388
Ratu Adil 700
rawābiṭ 200, 201
raʾy 182
rehbaniyyet 649
ribāʿ 5, 189, 229, 249
riyāsa 261, 262
riyāʾ 25
riyāda 508
rubūbiyya 89
rūḥ 482, 484, 682
rūḥāniyya, rūḥāniyyat 500, 715
rukhsa 508
ruʾya 58, 714

- ṣabr* 275
sadl 377
sadr 423
saḡar dar waṡan 507
ṣāḡhib al-zamān 619
ṣāḡhib wasāwis 176
salām 181
ṣalāt dā'im al-ḡaqq 698
samā' 6, 11, 34, 58, 124, 127, 130, 191, 217, 462, 475, 494, 496, 506, 516, 617, see also *sema'*
sanctus absconditus 112
santri 688, 707, 708
sarakata 669
sayyāḡha 2
sebangsa 634
sejara 668
sema' 610
semangat 732, 733, 734
sewujud 684
sha'ā'ir 480
sha'badh 177
shabbāba 199
shafā'a 154, 181
shahāda, shahādāt 218
shāhid 34
shahid 549
shajara 514, 515, 516, 517, 518
shar' 359
sharḡi 500
sharīf 248
shaḡhiyyāt 420, 432, 621
shaḡṡāḡhūn 138
shawq 192, 616
shaykh 40, 41, 366, 367, 476, 495, 506
shaykh al-fatwā 223
shaykh al-sajāda 43
shaykh al-shuyūkh 238
shaykh al-ta'lim 36
shaykh al-tarbiya 36
al-shaykh al-mu'allim 223
shifā'at 461
shirk, ṣirk, syirk 10, 50, 155, 159, 347, 456, 457, 459, 461, 482, 483, 657, 730, 754
al-shirk al-akbar 155
shughli-i barzākh 460
siddha 434
ṣidq 207
siḡhr 91, 618
silsila 132
sipihr 633
al-ṣirāt al-mustaḡim 681
al-sirr al-akbar 367
sirr al-naḡs 60
sirr al-rubūbiyya 60
Sitalā Bakhsh 480
slametan 697, 716
su'adā' 484
subḡānahu 428
subḡānī 428
sūdāniyyīn 278
ṣūf 177
ṣūfi-shi'ār mulḡhid 459
ṣūfi-shi'ār mushrik 459, 460
ṣūfikush 288, 627
ṣūfiyya 277
ṣūfiyyat al-arzāq 241
ṣuḡḡba, ṣuḡḡbat 484, 489
sulūk 690, 713
sunna qā'ima 488
surau 722
suwwāḡha 248
sūz-ō āh 510
ta'aṣṣub al-madhāhib 168
tabarruk 512
tabdīl 105
tabligh 716
tadbīr 483
ṡahāra 49
tahlīl 240
taḡrīf 105
taḡrīf al-qur'ān 113
taḡrīf wa-qarmaṡa 63
taḡrīm al-makāsib 25, 69
tajalliyyāt 104
tajdid 441, 469
al-tajriba al-islāmiyya 268
takassur 752
takbīr 239
taḡfir 110, 122, 335, 629
ṡalab al-inḡiṡā' ilā'llāh min kull mā siwāḡh 125
talbis 86
tamḡid 239
tanāsukḡh 70
taḡiyya 96, 305, 426, 530, 627
taqlid 148, 199, 214, 462, 463, 466, 474, 477, 479, 487, 488, 489, 714, 718, 719
taqwā 128, 170, 480
tarbiya 367, 373, 508

- tarekat*, *tarekats* 706, 753, 754
tarikāt 641, 642, 645, 647, 649, 650, 652, 653, 655, 657, 662
ṭarīq al-hudā 277
ṭarīqa, *ṭarīqat* 19, 31, 36, 40, 41, 43, 53, 199, 253, 330, 391, 507, 515, 531, 635, 673, 729
ṭarīqa aḥmadiyya 681
ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya 9, 43, 167, 170, 171, 173, 681, 685
tasāmuḥ 677
taṣarruf 40, 483, 485
al-tasattur bi'l-fiḡh 112
taṣawwuf 621, 678
taṣawwur-i shaykh 460
tasbīḥ 239
taslīm 616
tatbīr 286, 290
tathniya 101
tawaffi 61
tawajjuh 207, 489
tawakkul 47, 75, 86, 87, 90, 154, 275, 616
tawāqquf 122
tawassul aur shafā'at 485
tawba 3, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 64, 66, 67, 109, 125, 181, 578
tawḥīd 53, 154, 158, 211, 232, 315, 347, 376, 377, 406, 724
tawḥīd al-asmā' wa'l-ṣifāt 377
tawḥīd al-rubūbiyya 8, 154, 377
tawḥīd al-ṣifāt 154
tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya 8, 11, 154, 155, 377
ta'wil 3, 116, 120, 243, 244, 625, 627, 722
tawwāb raḥīm 65
tawwābūn 67
tešbih 658
tenasuh 650
tenggeri 542
tenzih 658
tevhid 647, 654, see also *tawḥīd*
thamara 514
tharīqat 729
thoriqoh 729
thubūt 104
tian 542
tiandao 542
tianming 542
ṭibb 269
tumbula 333
ṭuruq 276, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 338, 339, 340, 341
tuz etmek haqqı 544
tuz/namak haqqı 544
tusi 564
ʿukkāz 211
al-ʿulamāʾ warathat al-anbiyāʾ 163
ulūʾl-amr 487, 488
ʿulūm al-asrār 668
ʿulūm al-ḥadīth 665
ʿulūm shaṭhiyya 136
umma 105
umma Sūdāniyya 278
ummī 167, 500
undang-undang 668
ʿurafāʾ 621, 624, 627, 628, 630
ʿurf 469
ʿurs 392, 393, 399, 475
ʿushshāq 548, 616
uṣūl 214
uṣūl al-dīn 185
uṣūl al-fiḡh 213, 665, 666
uṣūl al-taʾrīkh 213
ʿuzlat 496
vakf → *waqf*
waḥda 232
waḥda muṭlaqa 104
waḥdat al-adyān 7, 104, 107, 113, 118
waḥdat al-wujūd, *waḥdat-i wujūd* 7, 19, 20, 103, 107, 110, 112, 116, 118, 119, 144, 228, 232, 243, 244, 406, 427, 429, 459, 607, 611, 612, 622, 635, 673, 675, 685, 708, 726, 739
wahhābi 458
waḥy 406
wajd 57, 83, 133, 496, 506
walāya 208, 331, 357, 361, 370, 374
walī 103, 116, 165, 208, 209, 274, 330, 331, 374, 468, 477
walī Allāh 212, 219, 223, 666
walī li-ʾllāh 331
waqf 18, 37, 200, 551 642, 643, 644, 650, 652, 662
waraʿ 51, 69, 71
warathat al-anbiyāʾ al-awliyāʾ 164
wasāwis 81, 83
wāṣil 616

- wasīla* 460, 714
wasīla banāʿiyya 486
waṣiyya 31, 88
wayang 687, 688
waṣīfa 330, 334, 721
wilāya 58, 61, 80, 331, 458, 617, 618
wiṣāl 616
w-l-y 330
wujūd 119, 667, 692
wujūdiyya mulhid 675, 676, 677, 678,
 683, 684, 685
wujūdiyya muwahhid 675, 683, 684
wuṣūl 130

xiangyue 574
xiejiao 557
xiejiao huozhong (teaching heterodoxy
 to delude the people) 557

yaqīn 163
yaqzatan 9, 365

zāhir 668
zamān al-tawba 53
zandaqa 118, 178, 622, 668
zāwiya 5, 8, 9, 17, 38, 39, 198, 199, 201,
 203, 229, 237, 242, 244, 251, 264,
 265, 266, 334
zhangjiao 560
zindīq 76, 260, 358, 616, 681
ziyāra, ziyaret 199, 647, 648, 714, 716,
 718, 721
ziyārat al-sādāt 275
zuhd 2, 47, 71, 74, 75, 176, 178
zuhhād 183
zuhūr al-fitan 128
zulm 250
zun Jing ge su 578

4. GENERAL INDEX

- °Abbāsīd 54
- caliphs 70
- rule 413
- °Abbāsids 181
- °Abd al-Khālīqiyān 505, 506, 507, 508, 510, 512, 513, 515, 518
- °Abd al-Khālīqiyānī 506
- °Abdakiyya 288
- Āfāqī 558
- Āfāqiyya 14, 558
- Afghan resistance 540
- African Sufi Islam 268
- After-Breakers 556
- al-°Ahd* 300, 302
- ahl al-bayt* 124, 129, 130
- ahl al-ḥadīth* 31, 68, 180, 183
- Ahl al-Ḥaqq 288, 291
- ahl al-kitāb* 202
- ahl al-raʿy* 170, 180, 183
- ahl al-sharīʿa* 249
- ahl al-sunna* 71, 181, 184
- ahl al-sunna wa'l-jamāʿa* 70, 479
- Ahl-i Ḥadīth, Ahl-i ḥadīth, Ahl-i hadīs* 465, 468, 469, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 489, 490, 491
- Ahl-i ḥadīth* movement 12
- Ahl-i Ḥadīth* ulama 473
- ahl-i shariʿa* 507
- Ahl-i Sunnat wa-Jamāʿat* 471
- ahl-i ṭarīqa* 507
- Ahle Sunnah wal Jamaat* (ASWJ) 395, 398, 399, 400, 401, 401, 402, 403, 408, 410, 415
- Ahle Sunnah wal Jamaat* of Azaadville 411
- Aḥmadīs 472
- Aḥmadiyya 21, 311, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 753, 754, 755
- Ahmadiyya 387
- Aḥmadiyya-Rashidiyya 741, 743, 751
- Aḥmadiyya-Rashidiyya-Dandarāwiyya 743
- Āʿīn-i akbarī 440
- °Akākiza 211
- Akbar period 449
- Akbarī, Akbarian 7, 15, 19
- Akbari era 450
- Akbariyya 96
- Akhbārīs, akhbārīs 16, 287, 288, 289, 628
- akhbarisme 287, 288
- Akmaliyya 699
- Āl al-Qamr 296
- Āl al-Shaykh 293
- Āl Būya 78
- Āl Ḥajjāz 278
- Al Irsyad* 20, 716, 717
- āl Muḥammad 137
- Āl Musharraf 148
- Al-bū Nāsir 308
- Al-Imām* 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755
- al-Manār* 749
- Al-Qalam* 400
- °Alawiyya 389
- °Alid silsila 495
- °Alids 136
- All-Islam Congresses 718
- Almohad 4, 195
- movement 184, 193
- period 194
- ruling family 211
- state 210, 215
- times 191
- Almohadism 209
- Almohads, Almohades 187, 189, 206, 255
- Almoravid 4, 191
- empire 187, 190
- period 174
- rule 184, 193
- ruler, rulers 193, 196

- Almoravid-era 214
 Almoravids, Almoravides 188, 189, 190,
 192, 197, 206, 250
 Ālūsī, famille 292, 295, 304
 amulet 155
 Andalusī Umayyad 206
 angels 483
 Anglo-Egyptian Condominium 278
 Animismus 732
 animist 526
Anṣār al-sunna al-muḥammadiyya 321
 antinomianism 211
 Apartheid 408
 — government 409, 413
 Aq Qoyunlu 37, 759
 Arab nationalist movement 41
 Arab Socialist Union (ASU) 320
 Arabian Wahhābī, Wahhābis 458, 464,
 466
 — Wahhābism 466
 Arabic 37, 536
 Arabs, Arabes 157, 283
 Aragonese armies 210
 Armenians 41
 asceticism 175
 ascetics 175
aṣḥāb-i Khoja ‘Abd al-Khālīqīyān 501,
 504
 Ash‘arī, Ash‘arite, Ash‘arites 33, 50
 — theology 426, 617
al-‘Ashīra al-Muḥammadiyya 321
ashrāf 269, 292, 293, 294, 297, 301, 302
ashrāf sunnites de Baghdad 299
 ‘*Āshūrā*’ 286, 290
Association des Étudiants Musulmans
 355
Association des ‘Ulamā’ Musulmans
 Algériens 341
Association islamique de Chine 576, 592,
 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 599
Association islamique provinciale du
 Ningxia 593
 associationnisme 305
 Ata, tribe 532
 auls 520
 Awlād ‘Abd al-Mu’min 255
 Awlād ‘Ābid 265
 Awlād ‘Ā’isa 257
 Awlād Sīdī Khālīd 257
 Awlād Ṭalba 258
awqāf 316, 523
awrād 277, 334
 ‘*awām*’ 217
 ‘aydarūsīs 305
 ‘Aydarūsīyya 19, 149, 675, 676
 Ayyubid 6, 230
 — period 228
 — sultanate 230
 azeemats 390
 al-Azhar 17, 344, 743, 750, 315, 316,
 317, 319, 322, 648, 658
 Azhari 17

 Būyids, bouyides 77, 288
baba 661
baba’i 604
 Bābis 288
 Babism, Bābisme 289, 634
 Babur’s period 447
 Bahaism 634
 Baḥrī period 231
 Bahshamiyya 4, 80
 Bakriyya 43, 68
bandir 369, 370
Banqiao 593
 Banū Azd 46
 Banū Ḥamdīn 186
 Banū ‘Ijl 46
 Banū Marīn 209, 210
 Banū Rāshīd 252
 Banū Sīdī Būna 199
 Banū Sīdī Būna *ṭarīqa* 203
 Banū Tamīm 48
 Banū Ziyān 252, 253
 Banū’l-Kayna‘ī 133
 Baqqāra 272
 Barēlwī, Barelvi, Barēlwīs 12, 397, 399,
 400, 402, 407, 413, 466, 468, 469,
 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477,
 478, 489
 Barisan Tentera Allah 723
 Barmakids 68
 Bāsha‘īyān, 293
 Basmachi 536
 — revolts 535
 Bāṭīnī 140
 Bāṭīniyya 7, 107, 139, 140, 141
 Battle of Balakot 454
 Battle of Gök Tepe 532
bay‘a, *bay‘at* 508, 509, 510, 723, 724
 Bāyazīdian rank 428, 431
 — temptation 428

- Bayrāmī-Malāmīs 607, 609
 bayramīs 606
Bayt al-māl 670
 Bektachie, Bektachies, Bektāshīs 152,
 291, 604, 650, 653, 660, 663
 Berber nativism 211
 — rulers 211
 — warriors 209
 Berbers 187
 Beylerbey, Beylerbeys 5, 253
 Bibliothèque Gazi Husrevbeg 648
 Black Death 242
 Bonteheuwel Mosque 402
 Book and Sunna 276
 Botha regime 411
 bouddhistes Junghars 541
 Bridgetown Mosque 402
*Brigade de la Fraternité du Bon
 Musulman* 343
 Buddhist 557, 558, 574
 Buddhist-Daoist 561
 Buddhists 521
 Buginese 688, 696
 Buhali Zande (?) "Guide des égarés"
 581
 Bureau des Affaires Musulmanes
 (BAM) 328, 345
 Burhāniyya 95
 Burji Period 231
 but-khānas 544

 C.U.P. (*Comité Union et Progrès*) 298,
 299
 califat de Sokoto 325, 327
Call of Islam 411
 Cape Mazaar (Kramat) Society 394
 capitalisme 328
 Caspian Zaydī community 127, 131
 Castilian 210
 — raiders 210
 Catholic 521
 Central Asian brotherhoods 40
 Central Spiritual Muslim Directorate
 (*Upravlenie*) for European Russia
 and Siberia 523
 Chachtuu Ishander 528
 chaféites 292
 charifisme 248
 charisma 516
 chiisme 658
 Chinese communists 14

 Chinese Islam 15
 Chishtī 11, 392, 425, 438, 445, 448, 450
 — forbear 447
 — lineage 447
 — order 445
 — saints 408, 445, 447
 — silsila 447
 Chishtī-Ṣābirīs 476
 Chishtīs 407, 446, 447, 450
 Chishtiyya 389, 391, 438, 444, 445, 458,
 470
 Chishtiyya-Nizāmiyya 482
 Chrétiens 254
 Christian 236
 Christianity 232, 346, 523
 Christians 231, 244
 Colonialism 39, 346
 colonialistes 328
 Communism 527, 726, 727
Communist Party of Indonesia 726
 Companions of the Prophet 41, 88, 89,
 90, 140, 156, 213, 223, 224, 360, 365,
 404, 433, 481, 713
*Conférence politique consultative de la
 Région autonome Hui du Ningxia* 598
coniuratio Sammāniyya 272
 Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1909
 (Iran) 631, 637
 Cravenby Masjid 402
 creative will 62
 Crusaders 230

 Daarul Ulum ((Dār ul-‘Ulūm) Deoband
 396, 404
dabbūs 310
 Dabhel ‘Uthmānī family 391
 Daghestani revolt of 1920-21 535
 Dajjāl 25
Dalā‘il al-khayrāt 150, 330, 404
 Danāqla 269
 dancing 217, 271
 Dandarāwiyya 166
 Daoguang period 567
 Daoist 557, 558, 574
 Daqahliyya 315
Dār al-‘ulūm of Azaadville 403
Dār al-‘ulūm Zakariyya 402
Dār al-iftā’ (Egypt) 317, 319
dār al-islām 69, 97, 123, 326
 Darqāwiyya 6, 264
Darul Uloom Aleemiyah Razvia 401

- Darwinism 632
Da'wa du Nigéria 339
 Daws 463
 Day of Resurrection 62, 159
 Délégation pour le Ningxia de
 l'Association islamique de Chine 586
 Delhi Naqshbandī 458
 — Sultanate 450
 — Sultans 439
 Deoband 407
 Deobandī 12, 404, 468, 472, 474, 475,
 476
 — Dār al-ʿUlūm 396
 — leadership 475
 — teachers 475
 — ʿulamāʾ (ulama) 396, 475
 Deobandīs 397, 469, 472, 473, 475, 476,
 478, 491
 derviches extrémistes 663
 Dhahabī 287
 Dhahabiyya 285, 620
dhikr-formeln 169
dhikrs 387
 Dhū-i Khalasa 463
 Didao 568
 Dimashqiyya 94
 disciple 40
 dismemberment of the Soviet Union 537
 Divine Names 222
 divine volition 62
Dīwān lughat al-turk 545, 551
 Dix grands ahong 580, 583
 Dix grands imams 580
Djamāʿat al-tablīgh 596
 Djamiat Chair 717
 djinns 101, 333
 dominicains 543
 Dongxiang 579, 580
 doopmal 388
 Drita Hyjnore 660
 Duff Development Company 747
 Dulkadirli ruler 243
 Dunqulāwī 269
 Dutch colonialism 689
Dzikir (*dzikir*) —> *dhikr*, see also Index
 of Concepts

 écoles ottomanes 297
 Effendi Islam 278
ehl-i bidʿa 610
Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi 395

 Empire de Masina 325
 — de Ségou 325, 326
 — ottoman 288
 — séfévide 285
 époque bouyide 290
 — ottomane 251
 — post-ottomane 662
Esale-Sawaab 399
 Espagnols 325
 État almohade 325
Études Islamiques (EI) 346, 349, 351
 European colonialism 759
 — Enlightenment 637, 638
 — nationalism 41
 — Orientalists 636
 — secularism 41
 Everyday Islam 535

 Family of the Prophet 133, 139
 Faridī 444
 Farāʾidiyya 453
 Fārūqī kings 429
 Fārūqīs 429
 Fāsiyya Shādhiliyya 9, 143
 Fātimids 375, 409
*Fatwah Committee of the Muslim
 Judicial Council* 401
 fayḍa Tijāniyya 381
*Fédération des Associations Islamiques
 du Sénégal* (FAIS) 348
 Felatah 371
 fiefs maraboutiques 248
fiqh of Koranic interpretation 213
fiqh-compendia 156, 158
fiqh-textbooks 359
 First Intellect 625, 628
 First Marinid Age 210
first Muslim World Congress 718
 First Saudi state 157
 First Wahhābī state 157
 First World War 281
 first year *ilāhī* 441
 folk religiosity 153
 Followers (*tābiʿūn*), Followers of the
 Companions 156, 223, 224
 fondamentalisme 304
 Foucauldian 218
 Franco-Arab schools (Senegal) 345,
 355, 356
 Francophone West Africa 341
 free will 89

- French colonial rule 342
 French imperialism 40
 fundamentalism 44
*fuqahā*² 5, 6, 98, 106, 108, 110, 119, 120,
 122, 156, 157, 174, 185, 186, 190,
 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 200, 201,
 202, 204, 203, 205, 206, 220, 252,
 258, 483, 621, 626, 627, 628, 629,
 630, 682, 710
 futuwwa brotherhoods 31
 futuwwas 287
- gambling 462
Gammu 352, 354
 Gansu Muslims 554
Gaskiya ta fi Kwabo 373
Gedimu 559, 565
 — ahong 559, 566
 — communities 558
 — religious institutions 572
 Ghazalian 19, 358, 716
 — Sufism 682, 683
 Ghousia Manzil 402
ghulāt 291, 619
ghulāt-i mutasavvife 612
 Glasnik 656, 657
 gnosis 57, 228, 237
 gnostics 50
 gnostique 331
 Golden Horde 499
 Golkar 726
 Gorbachev period 538
 government Islam 535
 grammar 213, 214
 Grande Mosquée Dongguan 587, 588,
 589, 594
 Grassy Park Mosque 402
 Great Mughals 437
 Great Tradition Islam 524
 Greek philosophy 624
 Grey Street mosque 400
 Gulistān 546
 Gülşenīs (Gülshenīs) 152, 607, 608, 609
- Habermasian 218
 Habibia Centre 410
 — Khanqah 394
 — Masjid 402
 Habibiyya Mosque complex 390
Habibiyya Siddique Muslim Pipe-Band
Brigade 390
- Hadži Sinanova Tekija 655
 Hādawī Shiism 125, 134
 Hadhramis 735
al-Hady al-nabawī 321
 Hairy 528
 — Ishan 528
hajj 84, 87, 158, 160, 343, 344, 737
 Ḥalawiyyīn 274
 Ḥallājīyya 85, 86
 Hamidian 16
 hamidien, hamidienne
 — 295
 — politique 295
 Ḥamzavī 15
 Hamzevis 639
 Ḥanafī 710
 — Muslim identity 487
 — Muslims 487
 — school 487
 — sharia-minded Sufism 474
 — ‘*ulamā*’ 479
 — see also ḥanéfite
 Ḥanafīs 32, 33, 479
 Ḥanafīyya 546
 Ḥanbali 148
 Ḥanbalī, Hanbalism 3, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31,
 43, 59, 61, 62, 64, 67, 143, 148, 160,
 161
 — madhhab 148
 — school of jurisprudence 474
 ḥanbalite 580
 ḥanéfite 580
 Hanikah 643, 644, 645
 Hanikah de Gazi Husrevbeg 643, 644
 hanikah-école 643
al-Ḥaraka al-qawmiyya al-islāmiyya 268
Ḥarakat al-falāḥ li'l-thaqāfa al-islāmiyya
 337, 338, 339
 Ḥaramayn scholars 679
 Ḥashimāb 278
 — brothers 279
 — family 278
 ḥashīsh 118, 241
 ḥashwiyya, Ḥashwiyya 107, 109, 135
 haṭha yoga 433
*Hay’at kibār al-‘ulamā*² 317
 Ḥaydarī, famille 292, 295
 Ḥayḍariyya, 605
 heresy 226
Higher Sufi Council 323
hijāb 354

- hijrī* base year 440
 Hindu ascetics 236
 — practices 403, 406
 — theology 433
 Hinduism 388
 Hindus 2, 232, 392
 histoires de Rustam 286
al-Ḥizb al-ḥurr al-muʿtadil 299
 Ḥizb al-mujāhidīn 2
 hodža “profanes” 644
Hospital Welfare and Muslim Educational Movement 395
houkai 557
 Huasi 581
 Huasi menhuan 568
hubs 200
 Hui 577, 579, 581, 585, 590, 591, 592, 597, 600, 602
ḥukamāʾ 624, 627, 628, 630
 ḥulūliyya 107, 232, 619, 684
 Ḥurūfis 606
 Ḥuwwāra 252

ʿibādat-khana 440
 Ibādiyya 759
 Ibāḥiyya 51, 619
 idolatry 480
 Idrisiyya 21, 272, 758
 Ikshidiyya 4, 80
al-Ikhwān al-muslimūn 341
 Ikhwān wahhabites 306, 307
 Il-Khanid 619
ilāhī era 441
 ilmiyye 639, 663
 Imām, Imam 20, 21, 625, 626, 627, 628
 Imam Ismail al-Bukhari madrasa 525
 imām-khāṭibs 524
 Imamate 625, 626
 imāmbāras 480
 Imāmī Shiism 15, 617, 625, 626, 627
 Imāmiyya 140
 imams infallibles 285
 Imam’s return 629
 imperialism 39
 incarnation 232
 incarnationist 232
 Indian Naqshbandīs 458
 — shrine cult 471
 — Wāhhābī 463, 464, 474
Indonesian All-Islam Congress 718
 Indonesian ulama 711

 indwelling 232
 inspiration 90
 intercession 159
 interior *dhikr* 503
International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations 596
 Iranian revolution 623, 707
 Iraq
 — Arab 17
 — Kingdom of 17
Ishāʿat al-sunna 474
 ishanism 526, 531
 ishāns 520, 529, 547, 548
 ʿIshqī 495
 Ishrāqī philosophy 621
islāḥ movement 314
 Islam in Africa 347
 islam maghrébin 331
 — noir 332
 — puritain 339
al-Islām waʾl-taṣawwuf 320
 Islamic *Daʿwa* 376
 — Faqeers 406
 — law 381
 — Peril literature 40
 — reformism 634
 — Revolution in Iran 529, 540
Islamic Student Society 411
Islamic World Congress 279
 Islamiyya Schools 381, 382
 Ismāʿīlī doctrines 375
 Ismāʿīlīs 129, 132, 133, 140, 141, 619
 Ismāʿīliyya 7, 124, 140, 272, 273
 Ismailism 634
al-Iʿtiṣām 321
 ittiḥādiyya 232
ittiḥādiyyūn 31, 100, 101, 107, 118

 jabriyya 107
 jadid Islamic modernist tradition 527
 jadidisme 546
 jahmiyya 105
 Jahriyya 14, 543, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 572, 573, 574, 577, 586, 591, 593, 598, 599, 600, 601
 Jahriyya Shagou 598
 Jalili, famille 293
Jamāʿat al-fayḍa 368
Jamāʿat ʿibād al-raḥmān (JIR) 10, 337, 339, 349, 351, 355

- Jamā'at izalat al-bid'a wa-iqāmat al-sunna* 329, 334, 337, 338, 339, 341, 357, 374, 378
Jamā'a 'Uthmāniyya 363
 Jāmi' Masjid of Delhi 455
 Jamiat ul-^ʿulamā³ (Jamiatul ^ʿulamā³) 402, 409
al-Jam'iyya al-khayriyya 717
al-Jam'iyya al-shar'iyya li-ta'āwun al-ʿāmilīn bi'l-kitāb wa'l-sunna al-muḥammadiyya 312, 315, 316, 321
Jam'iyyat ahl al-tariqa al-mu'tabara 727
Jam'iyyat al-ʿulamā³ 327, 337
Jam'iyyat al-Baṣra al-iṣlāhiyya 300
Jam'iyyat al-da'wa al-islāmiyya lybienne 338
 Jamil, famille 292, 295
 Jat groups 470
 Javanese 698, 701
 — literature 688
 — society 689
Jawāhir al-ma'ānī 166, 334, 336, 363, 364, 372, 374, 375, 378
Jawharat al-kamāl 376, 721
 Jāwī people 679
 Jāwīyyīn 668
 jésuites 543
 jeune-turque, révolution 297, 298
 Jeunes-Turcs 298, 299, 300, 301
 Jews 244
 Jezids 657
jihād 231, 253, 254, 259, 301, 302, 326, 358, 361, 376, 454, 466, 467, 534, 545, 549
jihāds 324, 326
 Jilānī, famille 41, 292, 293, 295, 296, 299, 303, 304, 307
 Jinn 59, 155, 330
 Jumah Masjid 400
 Junghars 542

 Ka'ba 48, 391, 463, 479, 481, 509
Kadi Malikon Adil 675
 Kadiyye 660
 Kadizadelis 639
kalām 33, 107, 119, 151, 178, 666, 672
 — ash'arite 109
 kalif 163
 Kano
 — Law School 372
 — Tijānis 363

 — ulama 369
 Karrāmiyya 33
 Kashghariens 550
kebatinan
 — movements 727
 — sects 727
 kersopstiek 388
 Khaḍirian Sufi tradition 216
Khaḍirian tariqa 216
 Khafiyya 14, 559, 560, 561, 562, 564, 565, 566, 568, 570, 571, 572, 577, 580, 584, 585, 580
 Khāksār 26, 287
 Khālidi 38
 Khālidiyya 697
khalifa-ceremony 393
 Khalvatiyyat Sammān 740
 Khalwatis 607
 Khalwatiyya 388, 604, 706, 707, 735
 Khamriyya, 229
khānawāda of Khoja 'Abd al-Khāliq 514
khānqāh Sufis 240
khānqāh-maintenance 511
 Khārijites 26
 Khatmiyya 9, 166, 269, 272, 273, 277, 280, 745
khawājams 548
 Khoja 'Abd al-Khālīqiyān 501, 507, 508, 510, 511, 516, see also —> 'Abd al-Khālīqiyān
 Khojagān 504, 510, 511, 512, 513, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519
 Khojagānī 13, 495, 496, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 508, 513, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519
 — silsila 497, 505
 Khojagāniyya 505
 Khotanais 548
 Khoton 542
 Khurramdīn 140
 Khurramī 140
 Khurramiyya 140
 Khwājagānī 532
 khwājas kashghariens 541
 khwān 6, 264, 266
King Faisal Award for Services to Islam 373
 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 145
 kirghiz 542
 kishlak 520, 536
Kitāb al-tawḥīd 378, 464

- knowledge 62
 Koran 9, 73
 Korawa 687
 Korité (*al-ʿid al-kabīr*) 352
 Koroko 337
Kramat 386, 394
 Kubrawī 495, 501, 518
 — initiations 434
 Kubrawiyya 287, 528, 532
Kultura islame (La culture islamique)
 660
 Kurdes, Kurds 39, 283, 291

 Laachi 528
 Laachi Ishan 528
 laïc 349
Lajnat al-mashwara 299
 late Qajar Iran 631
 late Qajar period 624
 late-Almohad-era 221
Le cadeau politique 345
Le Musulman 351
Le Reveil Islamique 345, 346, 349
 litaneien, Litanies 10, 169
 littérature de surveillance 40
 Lodi forces 418
 — period 444
 loges maçonniques 109
 logos 70
 love (of God) 234
L'Action Islamique 351
L'Étudiant Musulman 351

 Macassar Khalwatiyya 388
 Macassarese 688, 696
 macrocosm 708
 Madabawa 368, 369
madāʾih 272, 279, 280
madhāhib 8, 9, 115, 156, 158, 170, 172,
 276
 madhhabs 316
madrassa 6, 200, 225, 264, 551, 230, 237,
 242, 258, 264, 391, 395, 396, 523, 551
 Madyani 425
 Madyaniyya 423
Maggal 352, 354
Maghribi fuqahāʾ 193
 — states 39
 Magians 140
 magie 260
al-Maʿhad al-ʿilmī 279

 Mahdawī 449
 — millennialism 440
 — movement 425
 Mahdi family 281
 Mahdi-idea 273
 Mahdī-ship 274, 275
 Mahdism 40, 282
 Mahdist movement 8
 — poetry 280
 — revival 211
 — revolt 272
 — revolution 267, 271
 — seal 274
 — state 271, 276, 278
 Mahdists 277, 278, 281, 282
 Mahdiyya 267, 268, 277, 278, 279, 280
 Mahdī's discourse 274
 Mahdī's rūtib 277
Majlis al-ʿulamāʾ of South Africa 396
Majlis al-mabʿūhin 298
al-Majlis al-ṣūfī al-aʿlā 320
majlis idāra de Baghdad 296
Majlis Ugama dan Istiʿadat Malayu 748
Majlis Ugama Kelantan 754
 Makhdūm-zādas 548
 Makhdūmzāda khojas of Turkestan 559
 Makota Alam 669
maktabs 523
 Malaïen 730, 737, 748
 malāmātī 639
 Malāmī, Malāmātiyya 15, 25, 51, 604,
 611
 Malāmātiyya khorasanienne 604
 Malāmīs 608, 612
 Malāmīs-Ḥamzavis 612
 Malay 688, 696
 Malay-Indonesian Islam 19
malʿūzāt 497
 Mālikī 33, 54, 57, 59, 62, 79, 214, 710
 — dogma 207
 — *fiqh* 315
 — *fuqahāʾ* 182, 193
 — jurists 213
 — law 237
 — *madhhab* 214
 — school 213, 235
 — Sufism 62
 — *ulama* 211, 212
 — version of *uṣūl* 213
 Mālikīs 182, 183, 193, 211
 Mālikism 175, 206, 211

- Mamluk amirs 244, 247
 — Egypt 6, 23
 — patrons 239
 — period 209, 226
 — religious establishment 242
 — rule 242
 — sultans 242
 Mamluks 231, 239, 294
Manāqib of Khoja ʿAlī ʿAzizān
 Rāmītanī 497
al-Manār 303, 314, 335, 714
 Manchous 543
al-Maqṣad al-aḥmad fi'l-taʿrīf bi-Sayyidinā Ibn ʿAbd Allāh Aḥmad 169
 maraboutage 351
 maraboutic 5
 maraboutisme 248
 marabouts 6, 10, 328, 341, 342, 344, 345, 346, 347, 349, 350, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 757
 Marathas 454
 Marāziqiyya Aḥmadiyya 311
 Marinid 5
 — era 209, 223
 — period 211, 213, 214, 215, 216
 — rulers 216
 — state 213
 — sultanate 218
 — ulama 212, 214, 224
 Marinid-era jurists 222
 Marinids 215
Maroc utile 209
 Marwa 480
 Marxism/Leninism 520
 Marxist-Leninist 523
 Masarrī 4, 182, 185
 Masarris 181, 182, 183, 184
 Masarrism 182, 183
mashyakha 312, 317, 318, 321
Maṣjid-i Bahā ad-Dīn Naqshband 537
Maṣjid-us-Salaam 402
 Maṣmūda tribes of Tīmāl 211
 master-disciple relationship 237
 Materialism 633
Mathnawī 635
Maulid al-nabī 389
Mauloodun Nabi 404
 Mawlawiyya 17, 604
mawlid 158, 201, 202, 244, 313, 320
mawlid al-nabī 139, 201, 388
mawlid-ceremonies 158
mazār, mazar 444, 532, 536, 538, 551
 Mazdakism 140
 Mazdakite 140
 medicine 221
 medrese Alaudin de Priština 658
 medrese de Gazi Hurevbeḡ 648
 medrese de Tīrana 660
Meelad-e-Mustapha Conference 395
 Melamis-Bayramis 639
 Merinids 200, see also Marinid
 messianic Shiism 211
 Mevlevīs 152, see also Mawlawiyya
Mevlud 654
 microcosm 708
 mid-Qing 554
 Mingshale 556
 Ministry of Awqāf (Egypt) 317, 319, 321
 Ministry of National Guidance (Egypt) 319
 Ministry of Social Affairs (Egypt) 319
 Ministry of the Interior (Egypt) 319
 Mir i-ʿArab madrasa 524
 miracles 185, 190, 194, 256
 Mirghani family 280
 Mirghaniyya 9
 mīris 296
 mission civilisatrice 39
 missionaries 40
 Modernism 637
 Mongol 233, 619
 — conquest 517
 — era 492
 — onslaught 231
 — period 36
 — rule 513
 Mongols 226, 225, 231, 233, 242, 494, 542
 monism 233, 235, 243, 244
 monists 233
 Moors 666
 moriscos 205
 mosque of al-Ḥusayn 315
Moulod 394, 395, 398
Moulod celebrations 395
Moulod Jamaahs 395
Moulod-un-Nabī 395, 399, 400, 402, 411
Moulod-un-Nabī programme 398
 mouridisme 339
 mudéjares 205
 muftis 520

- Mughal conquest 429
 — doctrine of kingship 439
 — dynasty 441
 — god-king 442
 — government 470
 — India 11
 — period 417, 437, 445
 — rulers 424
 Mughals 418, 419, 424, 425, 429
 Muḥammadan light 472
Muḥammadiyah 20, 716, 723, 728
 Muḥammadiyya Shādhiliyya 321
 Muḥarram 480
 Mujaddidi shaykh 471
 Mujaddidiyya 458, 471
 mujassima 107
 mujbira 132
muḥtahids 287, 624, 626, 627, 628, 629, 631
 — chiites 307
muḥtahidūn 487
 Mujūs 139, 140
mukhtaṣarāt 212
al-Munīr 20, 714, 715
 Muntafik, famille 306
Muntakhab al-tawāriḥ 446
muqaddam leading 367
 Murabitun movement 396
 Muridiyya 327, 341, 348, 349, 353
 Murids 349, 352, 354, 508, 533, 536, 712
muridūn (Ibn Qasī) 184, 188, 190, 197, 202
Muslim Brotherhood 707
Muslim Brothers 319, 320, 321, 407
Muslim Judicial Council (MJC) 398, 399, 400, 410
Muslim News 390, 394, 405, 409, 410
Muslim Students' Association 411
Muslim World League 373
Muslim Youth Movement 403, 411
mutakallimūn 156
 Muṭarrifiyya 125
 Muʿtazila, Muʿtazilī 3, 4, 6, 50, 32, 33, 57, 67, 69, 70, 71, 72, 77, 78, 81, 85, 88, 89, 90, 91, 105, 124, 130, 759
 Muʿtazili ideas 178
 — theology 124, 175
 — Zaydi kalām 125
 Muʿtazilis, Muʿtazilites 184, 331, 615, 617, 618
 Muʿtazilism 175, 178, 181, 182
muwallad 188
mühimme defterleri 607, 608, 609
mütevelli 644, 645
al-Nādi al-waṭānī 299
 Nadmlini Tekija 655
Nadwat al-Ulama 476, 477
Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) 718, 719, 720, 721, 722
nāʿib 292
 Najdi 404, 481
namaz 646, 657
 Naqshbandi 2, 9, 13, 14, 20, 30, 37, 38, 39, 42, 458, 466, 474, 495, 497, 502, 503, 505, 507, 515, 516, 528, 533, 535, 538, 556, 701, 703, 712, 713, 715, 716, 719, 722
 — Barēlwi 476
 — cosmology 483
 — ideals 512
 — murids 535
 — order 538
 — polemic 495
 — reformers 478
 — ritual 713
 — shaykhs 714
 — Sufi traditions 502
 Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi 470
 Naqshbandis, naqshbandies 305, 306, 476, 484, 518, 554, 558, 559, 621, 714
 Naqshbandiyya 293, 304, 307389, 391, 393, 458, 493, 495, 496, 505, 528, 537, 577, 591, 604, 687, 697, 702, 703, 705, 706, 707, 712, 713, 715, 720, 722, 723, 724, 726, 727, 750, 754
 Naqshbandiyya Khafiyya 581
 Naqshbandiyya Khafiyya Beizhuang 579
 Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya 12, 458
 Naqshbandiyya *silsila* 715
 Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya 709, 710, 735, 740, 741, 742, 750, 753
 Naqshbandiyya-Mazhariyya 740, 741
 al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's mosque 225
 Nāṣir era 312, 321
 Nāṣiriyya 336
 Naṣrid 5
 — kingdom 199
 — period 174, 201
 — rulers 200

- National Islamic Front* (N.I.F.) 268, 273, 282
 nationalism 39
Nauka i religiia (*Science and Religion*) 529
nāzir des waqfs 293
 neo-fundamentalists 453, 466
 neo-Ḥanbalism, néo-hanbalisme 160, 268, 466
 Neo-platonic, Neoplatonism, néoplatonisme 207, 375, 624, 628, 658, 673
 — doctrines 178
 Neo-Sufi, Neo-Sufism, Neo-Sufik 21, 43, 165, 166, 167, 171, 172, 269, 270, 272, 467, 740
 néo-wahhābisme 122
New Teaching 14, 558, 560, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 570, 571, 572, 573
 Niassene Tijāniyya 363
 NIF → *National Islamic Front*
 Nigerian Tijānis 364, 369, 383
 nights of Ramaḍān 152
 Ni^ʿamatullāhī 623
 Ni^ʿmatullāh 287
 Ni^ʿmatullāhiyya 620
 Nizāmiyya 372
Njeriu (*L'homme*) 660
 Noah's ark 59
 nomads 157
 NU → *Nahdlatul Ulama*
 Nūrbakhshī 287
 Nūriyya 616

 obedience 37
 official and unofficial Islam 539, 540
Old Teaching 14, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 570, 573
 oneness 232
 Orientalists 636
 Orthodox Christians 521
 orthodoxy 37, 226
 Ottoman Empire 410
 Ottoman occupation of the Yemen 138
 Ottoman, Ottomans 5, 6, 7, 15, 16, 18, 19, 297, 301
 ottoman, pouvoir 291
 Ottoman Sultan 142, 280
 Ottoman Turkey 41, 143
ovliad 532, 533

 Paderi movement 700
 Paderi-Reform 700
 Pahlavi 632, 637
 pan-Islamism 410, 630
 Pandawa 687
 Panjabi 470
 panthéisme 658
 Park Road Mosque 402
Partai Islam Perti 723
Partai Politik Tarekat Islam (PPTI) 723, 725, 726
 PAS 731, 732
 Pasai 669
 perestroika 535, 538
Persatuan Pengamal Tarekat Islam 725
 Persian 37
 — mystical poetry, classical 635
Perti (Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah, Association for Muslim Education) 719, 722, 723, 724, 725
Perti ulama 722
pesantren 696
 Philosopher-King. 628
 philosophers 625
 Philosophy 634
 piety 153
 Pingnan state 568
 Pir Pagaros 759
pīr-murīd relationships 528
 Pirism 398
pīrs 391, 520
 Poets 635
 polytheism 232
 popular
 — cult of the saints 235
 — Islam 525
 — Mamluk manuals 240
 — Sufism 629
 Porte ottomane 283, 291, 292, 295
 Portugais 325
 post-Almohad messianism 211
 pre-Naqshbandī Khojagānī literature 502
Preporod 656
 prophecy 177, 179, 182, 188, 426
 prophecy, substitutes for 177
 prophethood 63
 Prophetic seal 274
 prophetology 472
 prophets 185, 219, 484, 485, 617, 635
 Prophet's grave 482

- Prophet's intercession 485
 Prophet's tomb 482
 prostration 41
 proto-Naqshbandī *silṣila* 502
 puritanism 39

Qabar Pujaari Jamaat 407
Qabar Pujaari Jamaat of Durban 403, 406
 Qadiani 400
Qadirawan Shehu 364
 Qādiri 361, 371, 425, 434
 — dhikr 453
 Qādiri-Naqshbandī lineage 759
 Qādiris 305, 361, 363, 364, 370, 377, 450, 476
 Qādiriyya 10, 16, 19, 30, 31, 33, 41, 151, 160, 292, 293, 296, 298, 301, 303, 304, 307, 326, 327, 333, 334, 336, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 369, 370, 374, 377, 378, 389, 391, 393, 394, 423, 458, 528, 558, 672, 675, 678, 697, 707, 720, 727, 758
 — literature 369
 — Nāsiriyya 336
 — *silṣila* 369
 Qādiriyya wa-Naqshbandiyya 701, 709, 722, 740
 Qādiriyya wīrd 360, 363, 369
 Qadizādeli movement 15
 Qadizādelis 610
 Qajar 627, 629, 631, 632, 633
 — fuqahā' 627
 — intellectuals 633
 Qajars 627, 637
 Qalandar 15, 22, 23, 25, 26, 44, 291, 434, 503
 qalandarī 604, 606, 607, 609
 Qalandariyya 604, 605
qalansuwa 34
 Qamr, famille 293
 Qara Qoyunlu 37
 Qarawiyyīn mosque 219, 223
 Qarmates, qarmates 105, 109, 333
 Qāsīmī
 — dynasty 7, 143
 — imamate 138
qawwaals 407
qiankai 557
 Qibla 409, 411

 Qing 13, 14, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 548, 549, 554, 558, 565, 566, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 583, 598
 — armies 568, 571
 — Board of Punishments 567
 — court 558, 561, 562, 563, 567, 570
 — empire 553, 568
 — forces 573
 — government 558
 — law 555
 — legal system 557
 — military 571
 — officials 557, 562, 563, 570, 571, 574, 575
 — state 555, 561, 563, 569, 570, 575
 — state courts 558
Quatre Communes 342, 343
Qutadgu Bilig 544, 545, 551

raatiboel haddad, rātib al-ḥaddād 388, 399
Radd al-ishrāk 455
 Rāfiḍa 151
 Raḥmāniyya 6, 264
 Rajab al-Rāwī, famille 292
Ramayana 687
 Rāmīṭanī group 505
 — legacy 501
 — lore 505
rampie-sny 388
Rasā'il Ikhwān al-ṣafā' 191
Rashaḥāt-i 'ayn al-hayāt 498
 Rashīdiyya 166, 272, 749, 752
 Rasūlid, Rasūlids, rasūlides 6, 105, 116, 133
rawḍakhānas 287
 Rāwī, famille 292, 293, 296, 308
 reason 633
 rejection of saints 154
 revolt of Cilegon 701
 révolte de Kūca 548
 — wahhābite 332
ribā' 5, 189, 199, 201, 203, 212, 229, 241, 249
ribā'-based Sufism 215
rifā'ī 308
rifā'is 305
 Rifā'iyya, Rifā'iyye 31, 38, 292, 293, 296, 297, 299, 307, 308, 389, 393, 604, 660, 675, 697, 706
 Rifā'iyya d'Alep 295

- Rikābī 277
 Rikābī Khatmiyya 277
*Rimāḥ ḥizb al-Raḥīm ‘alā nuḥūr ḥizb al-
 raḥīm* 166, 364, 366, 375, 721
 rulers 156
 Rūm Abdallān 605, 606
 Russian imperialism 521
 — Orthodox 521
- Sabirī Chishtī master 447
 sacred tribes 533
sāda 159
ṣadaqa 723
 Sa‘diyya, Sa‘diyye 17, 311, 660
 SADUM (Spiritual Directorate of the
 Muslims of Central Asia and
 Kazakhstan) 520, 524, 538
 Ṣafā 480
 Safavid dynasty 621
 — empires 759
 — period 127, 619, 621, 622, 626
 Ṣafavids 39, 624, 625, see also séfévids
 Ṣaffārids 59
ṣaḥāba 28, 153
 sainthood 209, 426
 saints 178, 185, 195, 201, 365
sajjāda-nishīns 759
 Salaer 558
salaf 234
al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ 223
 Salafī, Salafiyya, salafī 7, 10, 17, 20, 21,
 39, 42, 43, 44, 94, 115, 304, 314, 325,
 327, 329, 331, 337, 580, 584, 585,
 591, 707, 730, 749, 750, 755, 756
 — exoterism 224
 Salar communities 560
 Salars 558, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565,
 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572,
 573, 574, 575
ṣalāt 370
ṣalāt al-‘ishā’ 400
Ṣalāt al-fātiḥ 334, 335, 336, 365, 366,
 376, 377, 378, 379
ṣalawāt 399, 404
 Salgawa 368, 369
ṣāliḥiyya 166
ṣāliḥūn 153
 Sālīmiyya 3, 59, 62, 179
samizdat 530
Sammānī dhikr 271
- Sammāniyya 269, 272, 275, 281, 393,
 697, 709, 740
 — writings 271
 Ṣanhāja 212
santones andaluces 35
santri Islam 20, 692, 696
 Sanūsiyya 40, 165, 254, 758
 Sarekat Islam 717, 718
 Satan 4, 53
 Saudi, Saudis 9, 400
 — dynasty. 414
 — kings 414
 — traditionalism 31
 Sa‘ūdī regime 721
 Ṣāwiyya Khalwatiyya 315
 sayyids 292, 294, 295, 297, 298, 300,
 301, 302
 — Musha‘sha‘ 288, 289
 — rifā‘is 308
 — sunnites 295, 298
School for Arabic Studies (SAS) 372,
 381, 382
 scientific atheism 523
 scripturalism 39
 Second World War, Seconde guerre
 mondiale 10, 39, 344, 651
 secularism 39
 sedentaries 157
 séfévide, dynastie 288
 Séfévides 284, 285, 286, 289, 290
 seldjoukide 604
 semahane 643
 semi-nomads 157
Serat Centhini 688, 689, 690, 693
Serat Jatiswara 688
Sérigne Fakk Tall 353
Sérigne Lamb 353
ger‘iyye sicilleri 608
 Shābbiyya 260
shabihs 286
 Shādhili 237, 425
 Shādhili/Yashruṭī 38
 Shādhiliyya 42, 295, 313, 389, 423, 570,
 727, 758
 Shādhiliyya Darqāwiyya 9
 Shādhiliyya de Damas 295
 Shāfi‘ī 33, 54, 60, 79, 669, 710
 — law 237
 — *madhhab* 669, 712
 Shāfi‘ism 183
 Shah-i Mardan 533

- Shāh-nāma* 549, 595, 698
 shamanic 533
 shamanist 526
 sharia 162, 168, 202, 207, 222, 241, 263,
 299, 346, 358, 383, 406, 450, 458,
 469, 507, 515, 518, 523, 531, 546,
 635, 673
 Shaṭṭārī 11, 19, 21, 416, 417, 418, 419,
 421, 422, 424, 426, 427, 429, 433,
 434, 706
 Shaṭṭārīs 416, 417, 430, 433, 434, 435,
 738
 Shaṭṭāriyya 678, 697, 700, 701, 706, 707,
 709, 715, 735, 737, 738, 739, 744
shaykh al-Azhar 316, 318
shaykh maṣhāyikh al-ṭuruq al-ṣūfiyya
 311, 312, 317, 320, 322
 Shaykhī, Shaykhīs 287, 288, 628, 629
 Shaykhism 289, 629, 630
 shaykhs 520
shaykhulislām 285
 Shia Islam 15
 — fuqahā' 625, 626
 — hierarchy 629
 — Imamate 624
 — Imāms 618, 622
 — Islam 624
 — theological-philosophy and mysticism
 628
 — ulama 620, 621, 623, 625
 Shiis, Iraqi 16
 Shiism 15, 16, 625, 634
 Shiites 231, 475
 Shiites, extremist 236
 shrine-centered Islam 471
 shrines 153, 154, 158
 Shunūziyya Mosque 56
Shūrā 546, 547
 Siddique Mosque 390
 Siddique Primary School 390
 SIDRA (*Savez Islamskih derviških*
redova Alije u SFRJ, Union des
ordres de derviches de Yougoslavie)
 654, 656,
sihr 256
 Sikh kingdom 454
 Sikhs 454
 silent *dhikr* 505, 517, 559
silsila 31, 159, 193, 517, 528
 Silsila Qaderiyah Aleemiyah 394
 Sinanova Tekija 643
 Sinawī, famille 292
 singing 217
 Sino-Japanese War 571
al-Širāt al-mustaqīm 454
 Slave Lodge 390
Société de Développement des Fibres
Textiles (SODEFITEX) 354
Society of the Muslim Brothers 17, 312,
 319, 322
 Sokoto
 — Caliphate 361, 362, 363
 — *jihād* 361, 357, 358, 359, 361, 371
 soufisme socialisé 353
 soul, lower 221
 sourate des jinns 330
Sovet Ozbekistani 529
 Soviet empire 42
 — historiography 13
 — invasion of Afghanistan 529
 — Islam 13, 521, 534
 — nationality policies 533
 — period 520, 528, 540
 — society 527
 — State 13
 Soviet-Afghan war 535, 540
 Sparks Road Mosque 399
 Spiritual Directorate of Central Asia 524
 Spiritual Directorate of Central Asia and
 Kazakhstan 524
 Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of
 Central Asia and Kazakhstan
 (SADUM) 520, 524, 538
 Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of
 European Russia and Siberia 524
 Spiritual Directorate of the North
 Caucasus and Daghestan 524
 Spiritual Directorate of the Trans-
 caucasia Muslims 524
ṣubḥ prayer 724
 Sufi shaykh 223
 Sufism 634, 637, 638
ṣūfiyyat al-mu'tazila 69
 Suhrawardiyya 470, 558
ṣulaḥā' of the countryside, ignorant 215
Suluk Abesi 690, 693
Suluk Gatoloco 693
 Sundanese 688, 696
 sunna 9, 12, 29, 156, 158, 213, 224, 232,
 234, 236, 244, 380
Sunni Jamaat 400, 411
 Sunni jurists 130

- law schools 477
- millennialism 440
- millennialists 441
- Sunni Razvi Jamaat* of Durban 403
- Sunni Razvi Society International* 390, 394, 410
- Sunni schools of jurisprudence 487
- schools of law 214
- Sunni, Sunnism 3
- Supreme Council of the Sufi Brotherhoods* 43
- sūq* 175
- Sūr Afghans 419
- Sūrī interregnum 440, 449
- regime 419, 424, 425
- Sūris 425
- Suwaydī, famille 292
- Syair Perahu* 739
- syncretic mysticism 708
- syncretism 706
- Syrian ascetical tradition 46, 57

- Tabaqshālī, famille 292, 293, 308
- Tabaski* (‘*id al-ḥiṭr*’) 352
- tābi‘ūn* 153
- Tabligh* movement 13
- Tablighī* 399, 400
- Tablighī Jamaat* 397, 398, 399, 400, 406, 411
- Tablighī Jamaat* movement 397
- Tablighī* Maulanas 403
- Tablighī* movement 397, 403, 412
- Tablighī* supporters 409
- Tablighīs* 409, 410, 437
- Tadhkir al-ikhwān* 455
- Tafsīr al-manār* 313
- tafsīr al-qur‘ān* 214
- tā‘ibān* 127
- Taifa period 174
- Ta‘in* 752
- Taiping armies 569
- rebels 568
- al-Tā‘iyya al-kubrā* 229, 235, 244
- Tajik 533
- takīyas* 17
- talibé* 347
- talisman 155
- tamghāchiyān* 513
- Tanzimat 304
- tapas* 666
- Taqwiyat al-īmān* 455, 474, 479, 480, 487

- Tarekat Darajat 744
- tarekat Sukarnowiyah 725
- tarikāt bosniaco-herzégoviennes 651
- tarikāt des Bektachis 645
- Tarikatski centar de Sarajevo 655, 657, 659, 664
- Tārīkh-i alfi* 440
- ṭarīqa muḥammadiyya shādhiliyya 94
- Ṭarīqa-i Muḥammadiyya 12, 13, 453, 454, 457, 458, 465
- Tashkent Islamic Institute 539
- Tatars 522
- Tawḥid al-islām* 479
- taxes 242
- Ṭayyibī Ismā‘ilis 133
- ta‘ziyas* 287, 465
- tekke* 641, 642, 643, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 657, 662
- tekke* bektachi de Tetovo 645
- tekke* de Bistrigi 642
- tekke* de Bosnie-Herzégovine 652
- tekke* de Isabeg 644
- tekke* de Šejh Sinanaga 644
- tekke* kadiri de Sinan Aga 642
- tekke* mevlevi de Sarajevo 642
- tekke* mevlevi du Caire 650
- tekkés*, *tekkés* 18, 152, 305, 308, 309
- tekkés* rifā‘is 308
- temple d’Ushaq-tal 544
- temple Ulugh öy 544
- The Majlis* 396, 403, 406, 407
- The Muslim Digest* 404
- The Muslim Digest of Durban* 408
- The Muslims of the Soviet East* 524
- Tibetans (Fan) 562, 566
- Tijāni, Tijāniyya, Tidjaniyye 6, 10, 20, 165, 166, 168, 264, 272, 279, 281, 282, 326, 327, 330, 333, 334, 335, 336, 341, 342, 343, 346, 349, 353, 357, 361, 362, 363, 364, 366, 367, 369, 370, 372, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 383, 660, 720, 721, 722, 727, 728
- Tijāni doctrines 363, 364, 372, 375
- ulama 363
- wīrd 383
- Tijānis 336, 343, 352, 363, 364, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 375, 377, 378, 379, 381, 721, 722
- Tijāniyya nigérienne 335
- Tijāniyya sénégalaises 339

- Tijāniyya, wird of the 375
 Tijāniyya-Niassiyya 368, 373, 375
 tijāniyya-staat 165
 Timurid 619
 tomb of Chopan Ata 532
 tombs 153
 townspeople 157
Tribunaux Musulmans 342
 tribus maraboutiques 251
 Turcomans 604
 Turcs 253, 254, 255, 262, 263
 Turkmen 532, 533
 — society 532
 Turks 142, 410, 413
ṭuruq maghrébines 328
 Twelver Shia 124
 — Shii concepts 472
 — Shiism 16, 127
 — Shiites 614, 615, 619
türbe 647, 648, 662
türbedar 648

 Uighurs de Xinjiang 547
 ulama, uléma, 'ulamā' 5, 13, 15, 16, 110,
 116, 136, 156, 163, 165, 170, 171,
 175, 180, 182, 183, 185, 190, 191,
 193, 194, 195, 197, 200, 202, 205,
 211, 214, 215, 217, 218, 219, 223,
 224, 249, 250, 252, 262, 263, 265,
 272, 277, 285, 286, 287, 294, 295,
 297, 298, 299, 301, 305 368, 372, 395,
 397, 402, 403, 408, 409, 410, 412,
 413, 437, 473, 475, 476, 477, 478,
 484, 487, 488537, 545, 607, 608, 612,
 619, 620, 624, 625, 639, 655, 663,
 677, 678, 682, 710, 720, 723, 725, 759
 ulama chiites 284, 285, 289
 ulama du Turkestan 545
 ulama in Northern Nigeria 372
 ulama iraniens 289
 ulama of the Tijāniyya 374
 ulama orthodoxes 611
 ulama ottomans 609
 ulama séfévides 288
 'ulamā', Sudanese 280
 ulama, Sufi 274
 ulama sunnites 292, 293, 294, 297, 298,
 302
 ulama uṣūlis 287, 288
 'ulamā' *al-zāhir* 32, 249, 256
 Ulema-medžlis 18, 644, 645, 646, 647
 Ulema-medžlis de Bosnie-Herzégovine
 652
 Ulema-medžlis de Sarajevo 645, 646,
 647
 Ulema-medžlis de Skopje 646, 662
 Ulema-medžlis de Yougoslavie 652
 ulémas de Bosnie-Herzégovine 641,
 651, 653
 Ulemas of Deoband 404
 'Umari, famille 293
 Umayyad 4, 174
 — caliphate 183
 — period 175
 Umayyads 181, 413
 Umm Hāni' 263
 Umma Party 282
Ummat Islam 736
 UMNO 731
Undang-undang Melaka 669
 unio mystica 164, 168
Union Culturelle Musulmane (UCM) 10,
 327, 328, 329, 339, 341, 342, 344,
 345, 348, 349
Union Culturelle Musulmane au Mali
 339
Union Fraternelle des Pèlerins
 Musulmans de l'A.O.F 343
Union Musulmane Togolaise 339
 unionistes 299
United Ulama Council of South Africa
 (UUCSA) 414
 unofficial Islam 521, 533, 534, 535, 538,
 540
 unofficial neighborhood mosques 535
Upanishads 375
 Urdu 455
 'urs 392, 393, 399
 'urs ceremonies 475
 'urs of Hazrat Soofie Sahib 394
 'urs of Maulana Dr. Muhammad Fazl-
 ur-Rahman al-Ansari al-Qaderi 393
 'urs of Shaikh Sayed Abdurahman
 Matura 394
 'urs *sharīf* of Hazrat Shaikh Ahmad
 Badsha Peer 394
ūstāds 520
al-Uṣūl al-arba' 479
uṣūl methodology 215
uṣūl-driven orthodoxy 213
 Uṣūli 627, 628, 629
 — *fuqahā'* 627

- *muḥtahiḍ*s 628
- Uṣūlī-Akhbārī controversy 627
- Uṣūlīs 16, 287, 289, 295, 627, 628, 629
- uṣūlisme 287, 288
- Uwaysī, uwaysī 434, 454, 460, 505, 517
 - initiation 517
 - traditions 216
- Uwaysīs 36
- Uzbek 39, 533

- vakf* de Gazi Husrevbeg 644
- vakfija* 644
- vakfname* 644
- vakfs* 650
- Vatican 109
- veneration of saints 158
- veneration of the tombs 159
- villagers 157
- visionary experience 37
- vocal *dhikr* 502, 503, 505, 516, 533, 559
 - of the Yasawiyya 533
- volition 62
- Voprosy Nauchnogo Ateizma (Questions of Scientific Atheism)* 529

- Wafā'iyya 605
- Wagdaanieyah Moulood Jamaa* of Bridgetown 395
- wahdat al-wujūd* tradition 673
- Wahhābī, wahhābite, Wahhābism, wahhābisme, Wahhābiyya, wahhābiyya 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 29, 42, 43, 122, 115, 144, 145, 146, 147, 150, 153, 154, 157, 158, 160, 169, 171, 172, 173, 297, 304, 306, 314, 315, 322, 325, 357, 371, 373, 381, 400, 404, 410, 413, 414, 452, 463, 464, 465, 472, 474, 477, 478, 481, 482, 484, 541, 550, 576, 579, 580, 601, 646, 700, 707, 721, 757
 - expeditions 150
 - historiography 150
 - influence 143
 - Islam 314
 - movement 157, 306, 464
 - movement, early 157
 - teaching 157
- Wahhābī-inspired movements 368
- wahrtraum 164, 167
- Waar Bidi'a* 371
- wajd 506

- Wal Fadīr* 350, 351
- Wali Sanga* 671, 672
- waqfs* 292, 293, 296, 298, 307
- waqfs qādiris* 296
- Wāṣiliyya 616
- wayang 687, 688
- al-Wa'z wa'l-irshād* 317
- wazīfat al-taṣawwuf* 239
- Wedhatama* 692, 693
- Westridge Mitchells Plain Mosque 402
- Westville Masjid 408
- wird* 331, 334, 360, 365, 374, 375, 387, 712
- Witwatersrand University 409
- World Assembly of Muslim Youth* 393
- World War I 16, 312, 637; see also First World War
- Wujūdi, wujūdi, Wujūdiyya 19, 228, 674, 676, 677, 680, 683, 684, 685
- wujūdi* 228
 - metaphysics 427
 - school 228
- Wujūdiyya doctrine 677, 678
 - school 674
 - Sufi 677
 - Sufis 674
 - Sufism 675

- xiaoerjing* 581
- Xining Muslims 566
- Xunhua tusi* 553

- al-Yāqūta al-farīda* 372
- Yasavī, Yasawī 495, 499, 501, 518, 528, 533
 - communities 528
 - saints 532
 - Sufi tradition 502
 - tradition 509
- Yasawiyya 528, 532, 605
- Yashrutīyya 38
- Yemenite Zaydiyya 131
- Yiguang 590
- Yihewani 14, 15, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601
- yoga 433, 434
- yogi 434
- yogic disciplines 433
- Young Turks 41

- Ẓāhirī 79
zakāt 182, 185, 616
 Zanāta Berbers 209
 — tribal segments 210
 Zangid 6, 228, 230
Zani i nalië (La voix suprême) 660
 Zanj 59, 60
 Zāwiya Mosque 389
 — murīds 389
 Zaydī, Zaydīs, Zaydiyya 6, 7, 124, 125,
 127, 131, 132, 133, 141, 143, 144,
 619, 759
 Zaydī Islam 124
 Zaynīs 612
Zhongguo Musilin (Musulmans de Chine)
 593
 ZIDRA (*Zajednica islamskih derviških*
 redova Alije u SFRJ, Communauté
 des ordres de derviches) 654, 656,
 659
 Zionism 409
 Ziyānid, Ziyānides 5, 250, 252, 253
 Zoroastrianism 140
zuhr prayer 714
 Zunghars 559

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